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Probe to explore Pluto's nether regions
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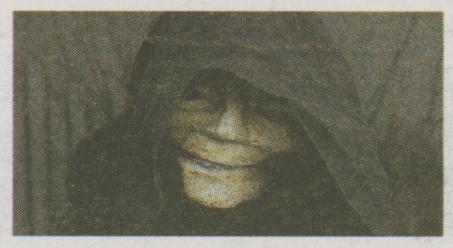

Puppet genocide at the Phoenix Theatre
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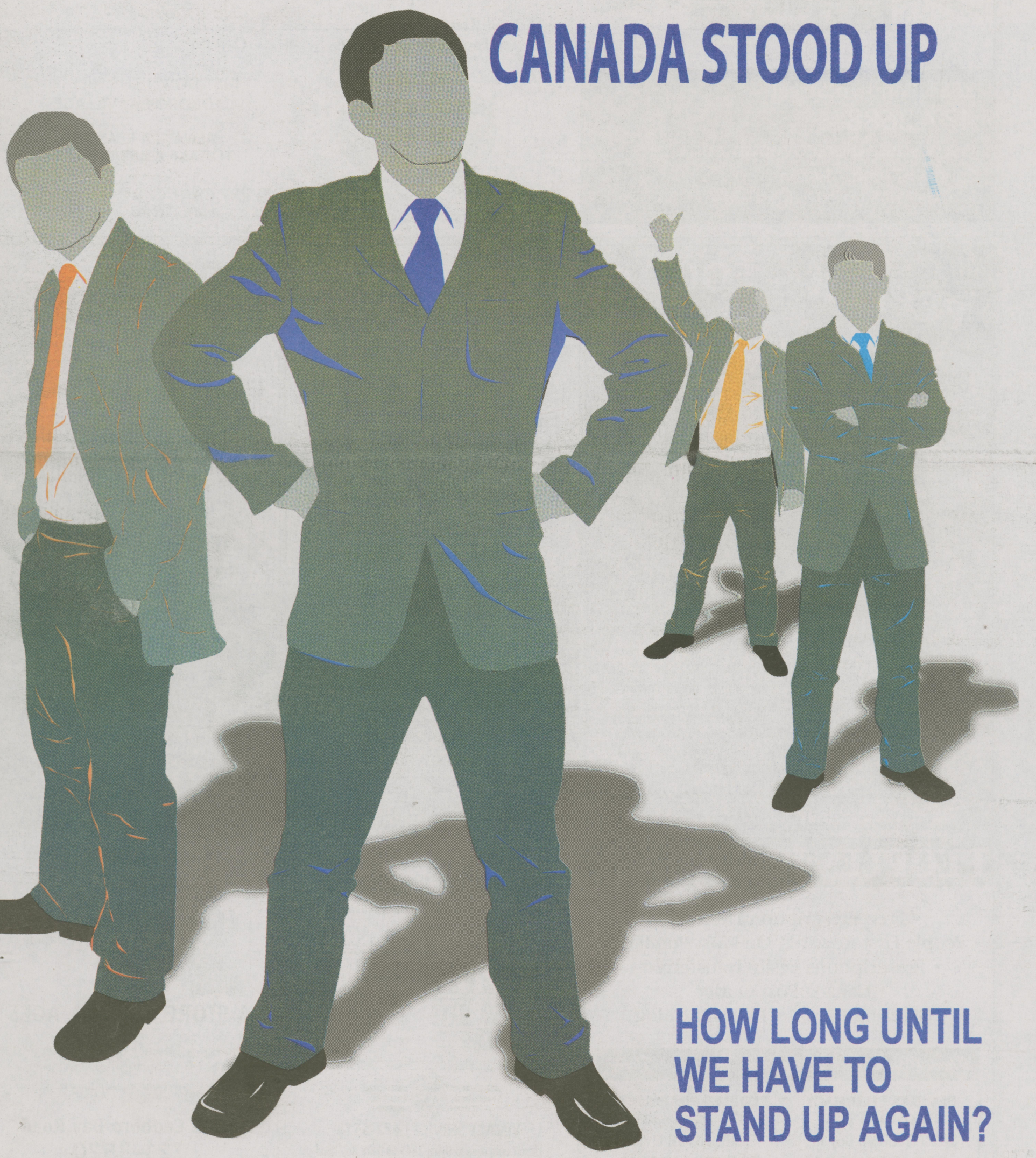
Thursday, January 26, 2006 | The University of Victoria's Independent Newspaper | www.martlet.ca | Volume 58, Issue 19



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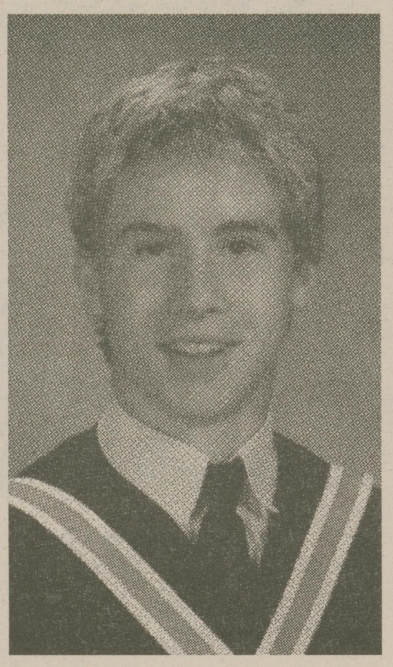
UVic student killed by hit and run driver

Police charge man with failing to stop at the scene of an accident

by Micah Luxen



LEFT: PROVIDED PHOTO, RIGHT: LINLEY FAULKNER PHOTO

Left: Mathers, pictured here in his graduation photo, finished his studies at Oak Bay High School last year. Right: A memorial in honour of Nicholas Mathers has been growing at the corner of Richmond Road and Newton Street since the morning of Jan. 19.

UVic Student Nicholas Mathers was killed by a hit and run driver early on the morning of Thursday, Jan. 19.

Police said Mathers, 18, was cycling home on Richmond Road when he was struck from behind near Newton Street.

Byron Gregory Kuc, 33, was arrested early Friday evening and has been charged with failing to stop at the scene of an accident.

Kuc, who has no previous criminal record, spent several hours with police interview teams.

Nothing was learned from Kuc during their initial inquiries and he was released on bail 24 hours after the arrest.

"In this case, he has no previous criminal record, nor is he considered a flight risk . . . so he satisfies public interest to be able to release him back into the community," said Price.

Kuc's vehicle is being examined and investigators are continuing to put together a timeline in order to determine if more charges will be laid.

"The investigation is still ongoing," said Price.

At the time he was hit, Mathers was not using a helmet and was wearing dark clothing.

With half a dozen street lamps over the Newton Street junction of Richmond Road, "the driver and the cyclist are operating in dusk- or dawn-type lighting conditions. So, although it's dark and raining, even for someone without proper reflective material, one would hazard to guess that you could see that person," said Price.

Mathers grew up in Victoria and graduated from Oak Bay High School last year. He was almost finished his first year at UVic, studying sciences, and spent his free time playing rugby for the James Bay Under 19s.

A memorial covered with flowers and pictures marks the spot where he died.

"I shared our high school years and wonderful graduation ceremony with Nick and I am deeply saddened and distraught to learn of this terrible accident. My kindest thoughts are with Nick's family," reads one card.

Another note of condolence reflects the young man's lasting impression on family and friends: "Irreplaceable and unforgettable, Mathers. You lit up [the] room with your cheeky smile and enthusiasm."

The Martlet *and the UVic community extend their condolences to Nicholas's family and friends.*

Fast facts about helmets and cycling safety

- Transport Canada statistics reveal that 60 cyclists were killed in Canada in 2001. Of these, 88 per cent were not wearing a helmet, including all of those under age 15.
- According to an Ipsos-Reid poll published in 2002, over half of Canadian adults (52 per cent) who ride bicycles never or rarely wear a helmet when they ride, while fewer (40 per cent) wear a helmet always or most of the time.
- Over 90 per cent of bicycles involved in nighttime fatalities have inadequate lighting, according to a paper presented to the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Annual Conference in 1990.
- Provincial data from Ontario shows 20 to 30 per cent of cycling fatalities occur at dusk or during the hours of darkness.
- According to the B.C. Injury Research and Prevention Unit, cycling fatalities make up 2.8 per cent of all road traffic deaths in Canada.

Some 96 per cent of bicycle-related deaths between 1990 and 1992 involved a collision with a motor vehicle.

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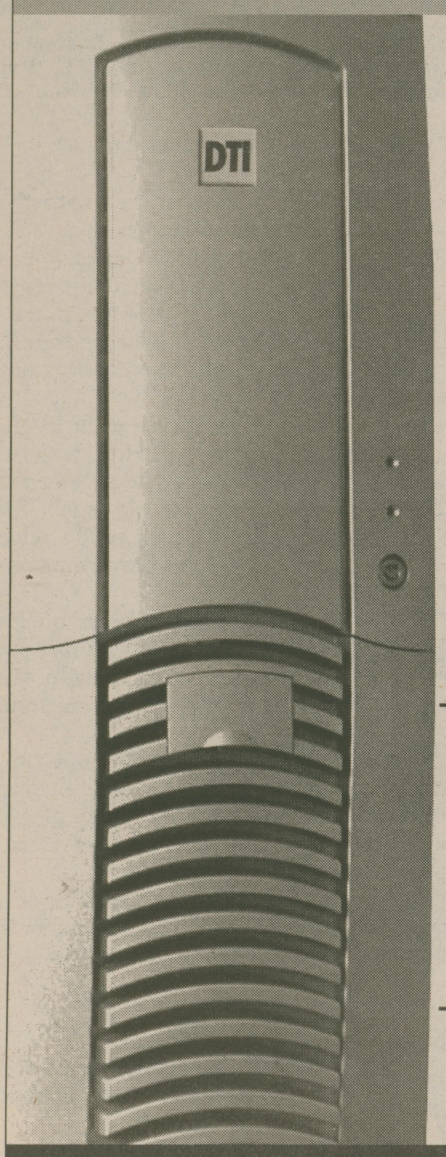

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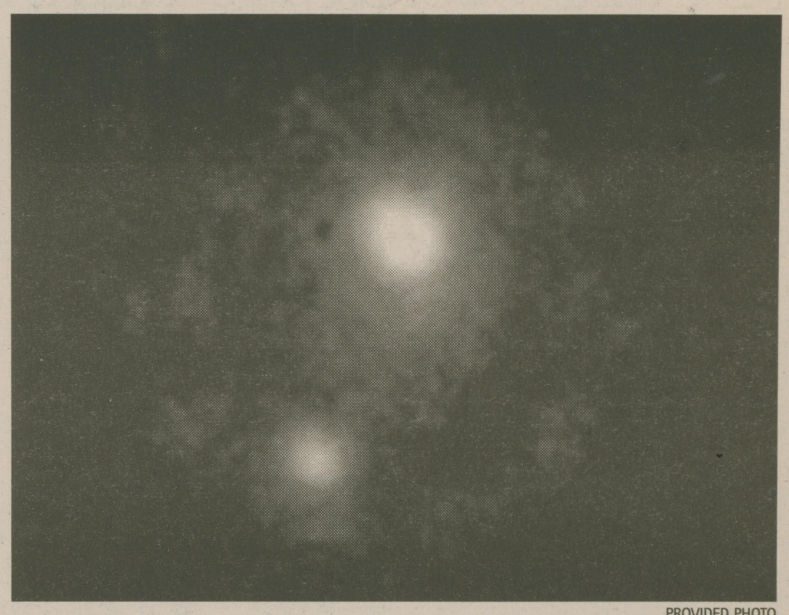
Space probe to explore Pluto's nether-regions

by Mike Vasilev



PROVIDED PHOTO

Pluto and its companion Charon are so far away that they only appear as blurs in this image taken by the Hubble Telescope.

A journey into understanding the universe began at a launching pad at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida, at 2:00 p.m. on Jan. 19.

NASA's latest space probe, New Horizons, a 51 million-horsepower Atlas V rocket, smashed speed records as it screamed out of the stratosphere at 36,000 miles per hour (about 58,000 kilometres per hour). If everything goes as projected, it will swing past Jupiter in 13 months, and will arrive at Pluto, its final destination, in under 10 years.

Nearly five billion kilometres away, Pluto exists in a very dark, frigid realm of space that we don't know that much about. The most accurate observations have been made with the Hubble telescope, and so far it has never been much more than a generally spherical patch of space-fuzz.

It wasn't until 1930 that Pluto was observed. A moon was discovered in 1978, and in 1992 astronomers hypothesized that the Kuiper Belt is comprised of millions of small, comet-like chunks of ice and rocks.

There are the only a few varieties of planets in our solar-system: the rocky inner planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars), and the gaseous giant planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune). Then there is Pluto, which scientists nicknamed the "ice dwarf."

"Just as a Chihuahua is still a dog, these ice dwarfs are still planetary bodies," said Alan Stern, the mission's principal investigator. "Pluto-like objects are more typical in our solar system than the nearby planets we first knew."

These planets, or planetary oddballs, might be the 4.6 billion-year-old leftovers from the formation of the solar system.

"It provides for us a window four-and-a-half billion years back in time to observe the formation conditions of giant planets," Stern said. "This is a little bit about rewriting the textbooks about the outer planets."

The probe is powered by converting the heat from the natural decay of 28 pounds of plutonium into electricity. As a result of the decision to use nuclear power on the space probe, New Horizons and all of its instruments will use less power than a pair of household light bulbs.

Its instrument inventory includes three cameras to capture visible-light, infrared and ultraviolet images of the planet, and three spectrometers to study the composition and temperatures of Pluto's atmosphere and surface qualities.

Its novelty inventory, on the other hand, includes an American flag, an urn containing the ashes of Pluto's discoverer, and a CD containing the names of the 500,000 people who signed up on the NASA website, perhaps hoping to making a Plutonian pen-pal.

Student carvers discover native culture

by Lisa Clement

WILLIE LI PHOTO

UVic's new Welcoming and Protection Pole is unveiled Jan. 20.

Last semester, a class of 32 UVic students helped carve a traditional native welcoming and protection pole as a part of an indigenous teaching course in the department of education.

Many months were spent carving the Thunderbird/Whale Protection and Welcoming Pole in the lower level of the MacLaurin Building. It was moved to the David Lam Auditorium for the Jan. 20 dedication ceremony.

"[The pole] is symbolic; it represents awareness of [our] people," said Songhees carver Butch Dick, who helped lead the project.

Dr. Lorna Williams, director of Aboriginal teacher education, created the program and designed the carving project to promote innovative indigenous learning and teaching methods.

Liekwelthout/Songhees carver Fabian Quocksister co-taught the student carvers with Dick.

"It was a transition, though not as demanding [as teaching]," said Dick, who is a recently retired teacher. "It was a challenge to help design a course about indigenous people."

The students carved while listening to traditional First Nations songs and stories, and nicknamed the cedar pole "the old man." The process was documented on video and made available for viewing online.

The podcasts include audio clips that were recorded live during the carving process, along with the sounds of carving, native songs and stories.

"It's a way to open doors and communicate with indigenous people, and, more importantly, have people on the other side to greet them," said Dick.

The pole will be installed for permanent display in the MacLaurin Building, in the hope it will create a welcoming atmosphere for First Nations students.

To hear the podcasts of the carving process undertaken by the students of EDU 487/591, visit www.polecarvers.libsyn.com.

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Research to help women living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

by Kim Armstrong

UVic researcher Susan Boyd is no stranger to the plight of women living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

She became intimately familiar with the experiences of female residents of the infamously dangerous neighbourhood while working with the Health and Homes research project, which took place between 2000 and 2004.

Boyd reported what she learned from the project in front of a crowded room at UVic on Jan. 19.

"People come to Vancouver as tourists and they're scared to walk down the streets because they've heard such horror stories," she said.

Boyd, an associate professor in Studies in Policy and Practice and a Senior Research Fellow at UVic's Centre for Addictions Research-BC (CARBC), gave her presentation as part of a talk series hosted by the Vancouver Island's Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG), entitled "Researching for Change."

She has lived and worked in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside for decades, contributing to harm reduction programs, drug policy reform and drug-user unions.

The Health and Home project was a longitudinal and ethnographic study that examined the effects of safe housing on the women of the Downtown Eastside. Safe and affordable housing is a major issue in the area, Boyd said.

"Even as I speak, gentrification [an influx of the middle-class] is happening and there's less [low-income] housing," she said. "In terms of 'do women in the Downtown Eastside have housing?,' [the answer is] no."

Boyd criticized some programs currently in place to help minorities gain access to housing, saying the focus needs to be much wider in scope.

"We categorize people in such specific ways that many people fall through the gaps," she said, giving the hypothetical example of housing that is available to Aboriginal women who have HIV/AIDS, but not Aboriginal women who have Hepatitis C. "Many people feel, 'why should we be categorized at all? We're just people who need secure, affordable housing.'"

This was just one of the issues that the Health and Home project wanted to address, with the aid of community-based research.

Community-based research, Boyd explained, is a form of research that involves members of the community in the project itself. In the case of the Health and Home project, it involved community members and research assistants carrying out multiple interviews with women living in the Downtown Eastside, as well as seeking their help in a multitude of other tasks.

"Research is often met with cynicism and mistrust," Boyd said. Having members of the community actively involved in the project helps open doors and earn trust that might not otherwise be given.

"Some projects lend themselves to being collaborative more than others," she said, adding this was one of the better ones in that respect. "When we have social action as part of our goal, how can we achieve that if we don't include the groups affected?"

Due to a temporary relocation to Halifax, Boyd was unable to immerse herself in the bulk of the project's execution.

Once the project was over, though, she was considered an ideal candidate to interview research assistants and community-based researchers, because her distance from the project's day-to-day operation gave her a neutrality that others who were more intimately involved lacked.

"Rarely are research assistants and community-based researchers asked to contribute. I believe [they] have much to contribute," Boyd said.

Those who are so closely involved with the running of a project often have valid suggestions for improvement, and also valid grievances that may not be discussed if the focus is on the research heads and faculty members in charge of the research venture.

"[The project] shattered stereotypes about why people come to live in the Downtown Eastside, and why they choose to live there too, because some people do choose," Boyd said. "We accomplished the things we wanted to accomplish. It taught us a lot about life."

Community-based research is an issue of ever-increasing importance to researchers, Boyd said. "Some of our research grants are now tied to community-based research."

At the same time, questions are being raised about what happens to grant money once it is received. Boyd said very little of it actually ends up in the community in which the research is being conducted, sometimes for reasons that are not entirely ethical.

She gave the example of a new HIV/AIDS vaccine that drug companies want to test on the Downtown Eastside's population of sex trade workers. She said at least one of the women in the community wanted to collaborate with the drug companies on the study, provided participants were first set up in safe, long-term housing. As one woman said to a project worker, though, "without us being sex trade workers, there would be no project, so they don't want that to end."

Boyd ended her talk with an open question session for those who had attended, many of whom were involved in community based research themselves."You can never give up hope because then what would happen?" Boyd said, encouraging everyone with a quote by one of the women who had worked on the Health and Home project as a community-based researcher.

"I think that true collaboration is very rarely realized, you know. And I think it is a good ideal to work toward."

LINLEY FAULKNER PHOTO

UVic researcher Susan Boyd says community-based research is crucial to helping Vancouver's low-income women get off the streets.

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PROFILE | BENOIT RENAUD

The politics of the left in Quebec

by Ben Bisset

Despite the slight delay and shaky connection symptomatic of any long distance cell phone call, Benoit Renaud's excitement about the future of the political left in Quebec was readily apparent.

A long-time activist and leading member of the Unions des Forces Progressistes (UFP), Renaud offers a unique perspective on leftist politics in Quebec and is set to deliver lectures on the subject at both UBC and UVic. I called him in Gatineau early on Friday morning to gather some information ahead of time.

After a few introductory questions, our discussion turned to 1999 and Seattle. Renaud described how the anti-globalization protests in that city marked a pivotal turning point in the history of the organized left.

"The late '80s and early '90s were a very difficult time to be an activist, it was hard to get anything moving," said Renaud. "But since '99, we've seen everything bigger. . . . The student strike that happened in Quebec last year was three times bigger

PROVIDED PHOTO

Benoit Renaud and four or five thousand of his friends are starting a left-wing political party in Quebec.

than anything I have seen in my life in terms of the number of students involved and the sheer impact and magnitude of it. Same thing with the anti-war movement of 2003, compared with the other Iraq war in 1991."

The resurgence of leftist politics in Quebec seems to parallel a similar movement taking place on the global stage. In the seven years since the so-called "Battle of Seattle,"a vibrant international umbrella of leftist activist groups and political parties has emerged, many of which seek to offer an alternative to those disillusioned with the neoliberal model of global capitalist integration.

As Renaud emphasized, "A lot more people than before, not just in Quebec but around the world, are taking action, are willing to do things. Going to demonstrations, sending postcards, anything. There is a much higher level of activity in the general population."

The UFP itself appears to be evidence of this trend. Founded in 2002, the UFP was the end result of a merger between three distinct groups by activists who sought to fuse Quebec's heterogeneous left into a single, unified movement. Further consolidation will take place in February when the UFP joins with another group, Option Citoyenne, to form a distinct political party.

According to Renaud, this is an historic occasion. "For the first time ever, in the whole history of Quebec, [there will be] a clearly left-wing political party identified with the social movements of the left with four or five thousand members right from the start." Renaud is confident about the UFP's potential and describes it as a "small mass party, which is very exciting but also challenging."

Yet the success of any political party in Quebec depends largely on its ability to tackle the difficult issue of sovereignty. Indeed, Renaud attributes the relative success of the Conservative Party in Quebec prior to the national election to the Tories' ability to present themselves as the only party capable of defending federalism.

He also emphasizes their appeal to "soft nationalists," who seek to increase Quebec's power within Canada. As Renaud pointed out, "it's not so much support for the Conservative Party's social or economic platform, it's about preserving Canadian unity while giving more autonomy to Quebec."

For the UFP, the issue of sovereignty is more than simply a discussion about Quebec's place within federalism. Instead, it presents an opportunity to think about ways in which to make Quebec a more just and equitable society.

Although the UFP supports Quebec's right to self-determination, it is more interested in what a Quebecois state might look like after separation. "Quebec independence is not just simply about taking the province the way it is right now and giving it more power. That's not a very compelling project. . . . [We need to decide] what this country would be about, what the rules would be, what its constitution would be, what everybody's rights would be."

In its platform, the UFP calls for the creation of a Citizen's Assembly to address these pressing questions.

Despite the various challenges that lie ahead, Renaud remains optimistic about the future of leftist politics, both in Quebec and globally. As we finished, Renaud reminded me that, despite what I may have heard, "the movement is still very much alive."

Benoit Renaud will be speaking along with UVic Political Science Professor Radhika Desai on Saturday, Jan. 28 at 1 p.m. in SUB B025.

Secrets of the Confident Conversationalist

by Kurt Heinrich

Confident conversation skills can win you jobs and friends.

That's the message Lynn McCaughey, a career educator with UVic's Career Services at UVic, tried to get across to students attending a Jan. 23 workshop.

The event was one of the first of a number of upcoming Grad Year Connection Workshops scheduled by the centre.

"I think a lot of students are very familiar with conversing with each other but many are less familiar with conversation needed in career transition," said Susan Corner, a student affairs co-ordinator at UVic's Student Transition Centre. "We really want to support students in the transition to the next stage of their lives."

During the workshop, McCaughey spoke to her audience about a variety of conversational skills, including proper introductions, open posture, and polite conversation with prospective employment reps, bosses, and professors.

"The talk was very interesting," said Irina Goundareva, a fourth year student in linguistics and Hispanic studies who attended the talk. "She brought to our attention to little things that you don't usually think about."

Corner said though she has yet to compile all the feedback forms, initial comments she has reviewed have been exceedingly positive.

According to McCaughey, one of the best ways of dealing with a variety of acquaintances is to identify what you are hoping to achieve in the interview in a manageable goal.

Students should approach any career-related conversation with a clear sense of purpose, rather than without communicating enough ambition to tell prospective employers what they want.

Equally important, she said, is figuring out what you can give to the employer to keep them interested in you.

One of the best ways of doing this is to illustrate your own connection to the employer.

"The way to do this is to do your homework," said McCaughey.

If you don't have the time or opportunity to read up on your potential employer, another way of showing interest is curiosity.

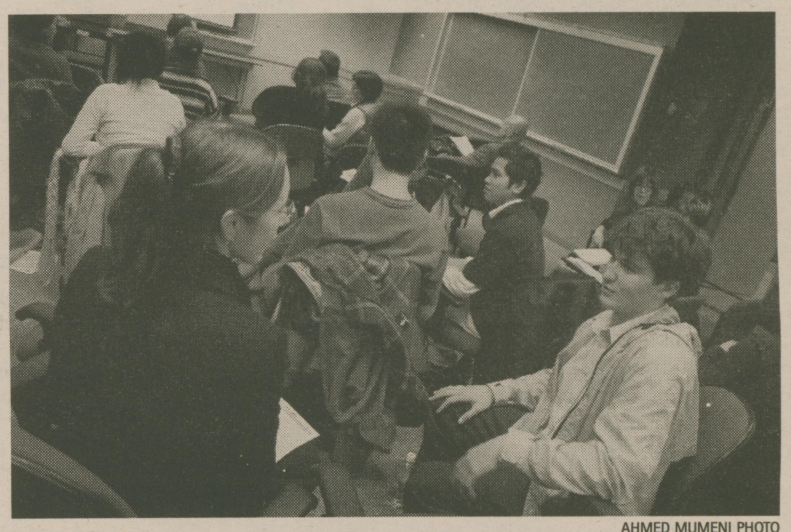
"When you're going to meet someone, try to find out something about them. It will make a difference on the overall tone of the conversation," she said.

Icebreaker questions about the representative or employers' past experiences can often quickly lead to common ground, connecting your new conversation partner to you.

McCaughey recommends students use their own personal experiences to do this, be they career interests, past volunteer work or traveling experiences.

Hints for performing well at professional mixers include using friendly and open body language to empower your message.

McCaughey also recommends searching for "the white-knuckled drinker" in the crowd—the person who is even more nervous about "stand up and mingle" functions than you are. Partner up with them early on, recommended the career educator, and you will no longer be flying through the mixer without any support.



AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

UVic students practiced the fine art of conversing fearlessly during a recent workshop put on by Grad Year Connections.

The talk by McCaughey lasted roughly an hour and was followed by a follow-up workshop at Sweet Greens, where students mingled, practicing the skills lectured on in the previous hour.

Students can check out the Grad Year Transition Centre's workshop calendar at http://gradyearorientation.uvic.ca.

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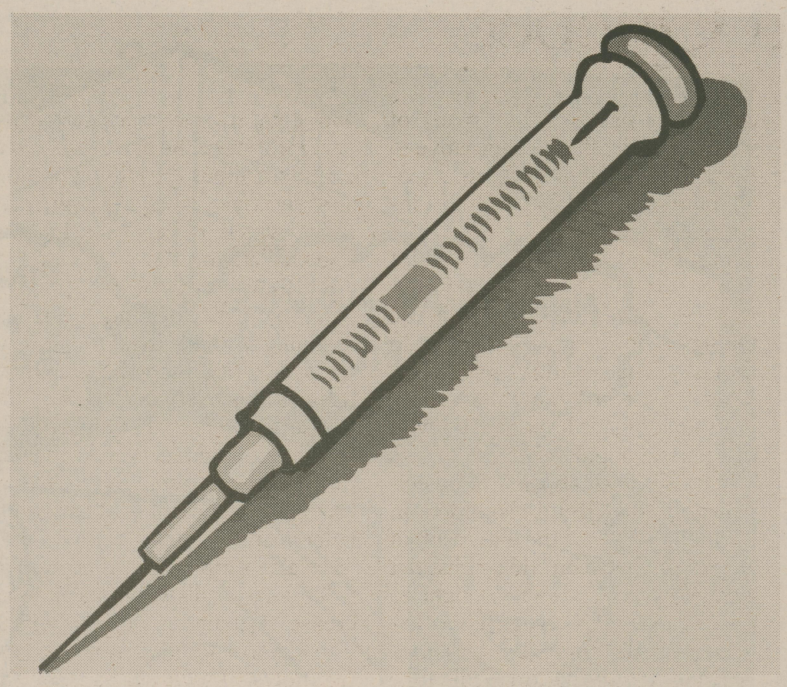
Student raises concerns about Depo-shot

by William Wolfe-Wylie
CUP Atlantic Bureau Chief



PROVIDED GRAPHIC

The Depo-Provera birth control shot is the target of a class-action lawsuit filed by users who say the drug has negatively affected their bone mass density.

TORONTO (CUP) — Bone density and calcium intake aren't things most women in their twenties think about on a daily basis.

But for a second-year student at Mt. Allison University the concerns have become legitimate, and she's blaming an easy and convenient form of birth control: Depo-Provera, a drug already the subject of a class-action suit in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

Depo-Provera is manufactured by Pfizer Inc. and is a powerful form of birth control administered by injection. Once administered, Depo-Provera "stops the ovaries from releasing eggs" and "causes the cervical mucus to thicken and changes the uterine lining, making it harder for sperm to enter or survive in the uterus," according to the Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC) in Washington.

But the convenience of only worrying about birth control four times per year comes with a cost, according to the lawsuit launched in Ontario.

Plaintiffs in Ontario, British Columbia, and Newfoundland are seeking millions of dollars in reparations after being "diagnosed as having various bone mass density (BMD) problems, which include: bone density loss, fractures, hip and spine problems, avascular necrosis, osteoporosis and other low bone density injuries, which they each attribute to the use of Defendant's product," according to a release from the law firm hired by the defendants.

Janet Logan, born and raised in Nova Scotia and now attending university in New Brunswick, first became suspicious of the drug and its possible side effects when she heard rumours of lawsuits coming out of the U.S. At first her doctor was reluctant to give her a bone scan because of her age and high activity level.

"I drink milk a lot and like to work out," said Logan, who has been taking Depo-Provera since she was in grade ten.

But due to her concern about side effects after several years on the drug, she pressed on and was eventually scheduled for a scan. When her doctor reviewed her results several weeks later, Logan was advised to discontinue her use of the drug. "In the first week of December I would have had to take another shot," she said.

But Logan isn't out of the woods yet. According to the FWHC, it can take between six and 12 months for a woman to return to fertility after she has stopped taking Depo-Provera. During the several month detoxification period, she may experience "weight gain, depression, breast tenderness, allergic reactions, and menstrual irregularities."

But the length of time it takes for bone density to return to normal is unknown, and some studies suggest it might be irreversible.

Logan is not planning on joining the class action suit being launched in Ontario, but she is trying to spread the word to women who are using the drug that there might be some problems they are not aware of.

"I never believed the rumours," said Logan. "One of my friends has been on it for a year and isn't planning on quitting yet."

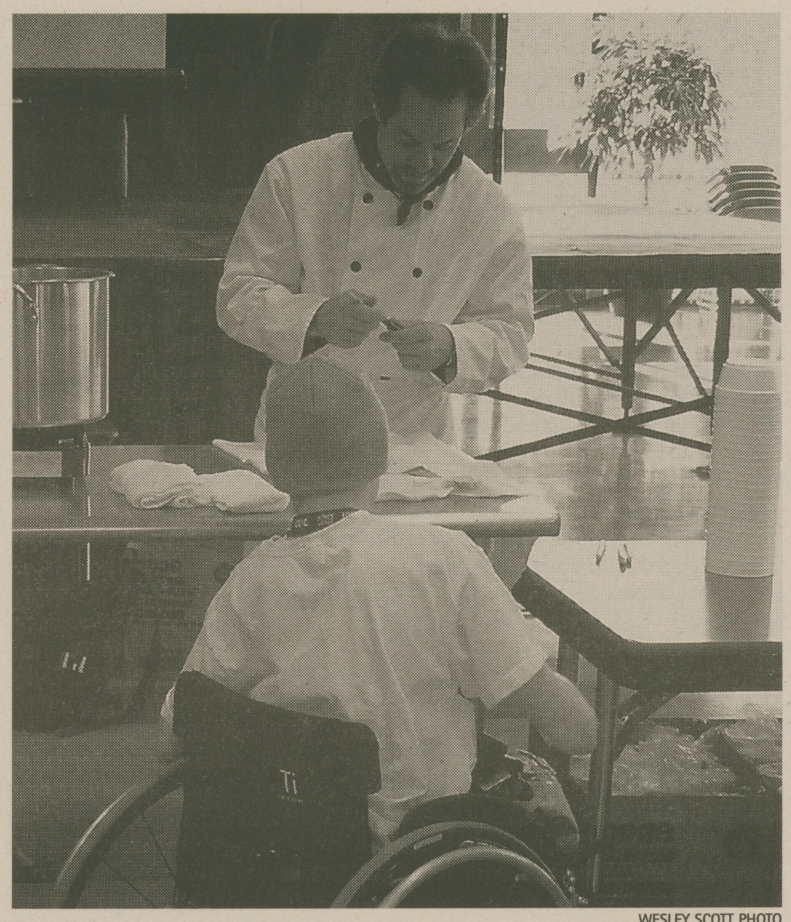
According to Cindy Crossman, Mt. Allison University's nurse educator at the Student Health Centre, between eight and 10 per cent of women who go to the Health Centre with birth control questions are using, or thinking about using, Depo-Provera.

For students interested in checking their bone density, appointments can be scheduled through a family doctor. The process is non-invasive and painless, taking between five and ten minutes. Patients lie on a bed and remain perfectly still while a scanner moves above them.

"I'd definitely advise anyone on Depo to get out and get a bone density scan," said Logan.

For now, Logan is not taking any form of birth control and she is taking daily calcium pills and drinking lots of milk to try to rebuild her bones. Another scan is scheduled for the summer to see if there has been any improvement.

No diabetes for you!



WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO

Seinfeld Soup Nazi Larry Thomas was on campus Jan. 20, serving up soup to hungry students in exchange for a $3 donation to the Canadian Diabetes Association.
Gross revenue from the fundraiser totalled over $4,600, but there was no word at press time of the net proceeds.

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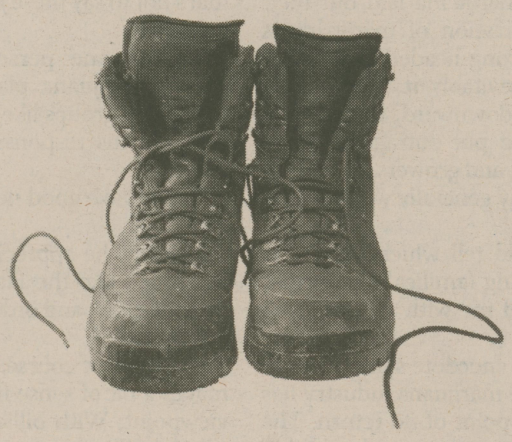

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Editorial

Politics still an old boys' club

Once again, the country is going to be governed by a bunch of white men.

This isn't surprising of course, since white men have always run Canada. But it is a bit of a concern, or should be, when you consider that the majority of Canadians aren't white men—they aren't even men.

Despite the fact that women account for 51 per cent of the population, they hold just over one-fifth of the seats in parliament. Based on preliminary results, only 64 of the 308 newly elected members of parliament are women—down from 65 after the 2004 election.

Canada was ranked 23rd in the world based on the number of women elected in 2004—slightly behind Ethiopia, but ahead of Latvia.

Of course, Canada's not alone in its lack of female representation. Worldwide, women hold only about 16 per centof the seats in national parliaments—around 6,690 seats in total.

In 1995 at the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, governments set a goal of women achieving at least 30 per cent of the seats in national parliaments.

There have been notable gains. Women run governments in 10 countries, and that number will rise to 11 when Michelle Bachelet takes the oath of office in Chile in March.

The highest number of female heads of state was 15, in 1993. That time coincides with the term of Canada's only female head of state, Kim Campbell, who was Prime Minister for four months between June 25 and Nov. 4, 1993.

But it's not that women just aren't getting votes in Canada—they aren't running in the first place.

There were 380 female candidates in a field of 1,634. In other words, only one-quarter of the people running were women.

The major parties don't have a great record when it comes to nominating women. The NDP tops the group—35.1 per cent of the party's candidates were women. On the other end, only 12.4 per cent of the Conservative candidates were women.

Political leaders always proclaim themselves eager for more representation of women in Parliament, but that never seems to be a priority when it rolls around to election time.

A little over two years ago, before he became leader of the Liberal party, Paul Martin made a couple of surprising statements.

Looking ahead to the election that eventually took place in June 2004, he said: "We cannot go into this election campaign unless we have the largest number of women candidates in Liberal riding history."

Even that small goal wasn't achieved—women made up a larger percentage of Liberal candidates in 1997.

Another problem is that even when women do get nominated, it is frequently in those ridings where their political party has little chance of victory anyway.

Until parties start respecting female politicians, things aren't going to change.

And there isn't going to be change until we demand it. In the time before the next election, we need to make sure that all Canadians are getting the representation they deserve.

Editorial topics are decided at weekly editorial meetings and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all staff members.

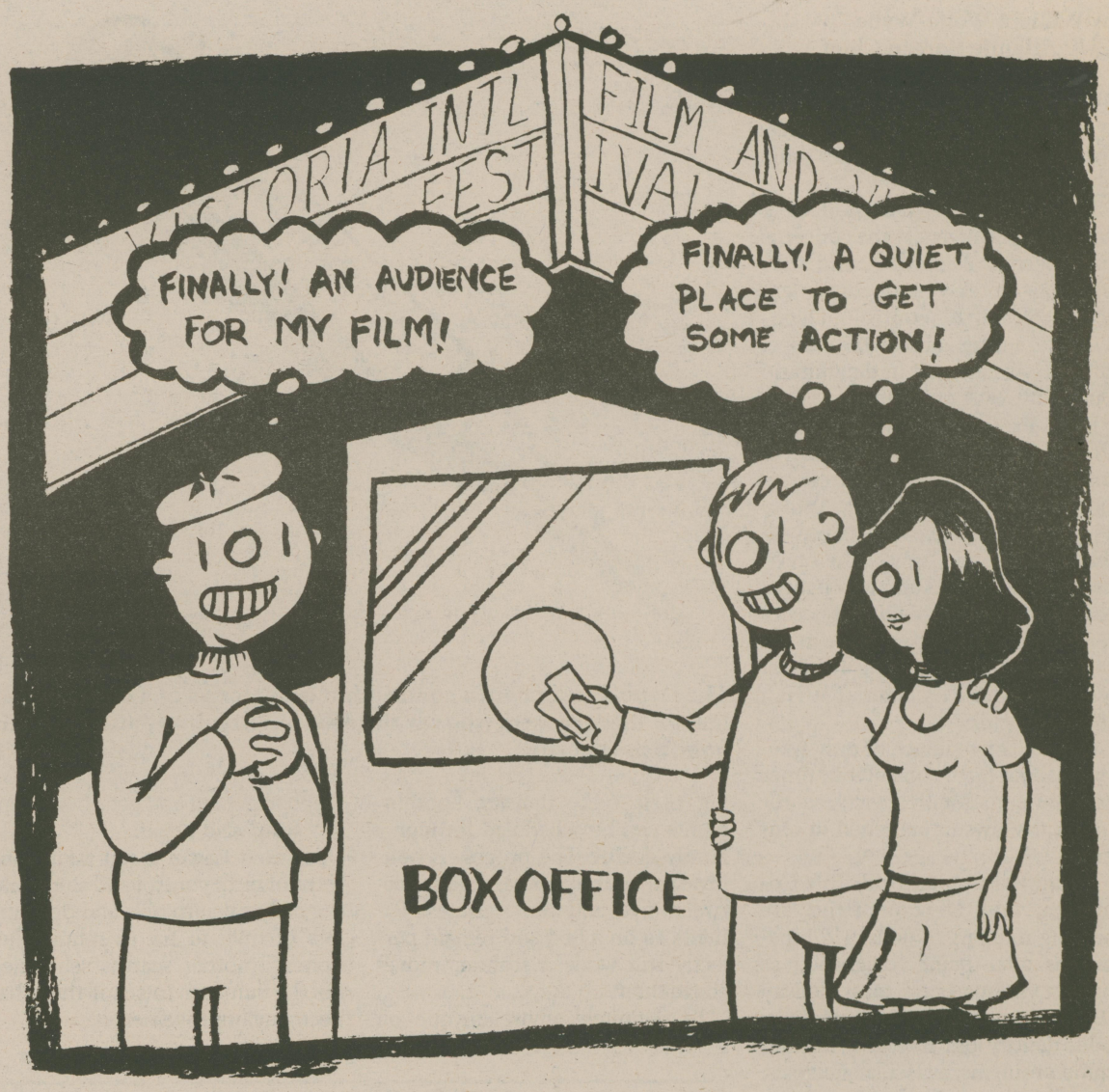
edit@martlet.ca

THUMBS UP | THUMBS DOWN

Thumbs Up
To there being real pirates off the coast of Somalia. "Yarr, buy my illegal weapons, wench!" Now we just need more ninjas, and it's on!

Thumbs Down
To Depo-Provera shots, which may cause bone density loss. And without bones, we'd be kind of gooey. Bleah.

EDITORIAL CARTOON | WORTH THE PRICE OF ADMISSION



ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

LETTERS

Put this in your pipe and smoke it

Dr. Joy Johnson should wake up to the fact that everything the drug warriors say about marijuana is a twisted lie ("New research to be presented on pot use," *Martlet* Jan. 19). The message being delivered to teenagers isn't blurred. Kids are very much aware of the fact that dim-witted drug crusaders constantly lie about drugs, especially marijuana.

If there's any confusion about marijuana, blame drug warriors who think lies deliver a trusted message.

The reason smoking marijuana is "acceptable" is because kids know pot use is harmless.

-Redford Givens

Growing for the neighbourhood

Would legalizing marijuana be good for the authorities?

by Tim Lindsay

A retired B.C. teacher recently told me a funny story about a grade eight class she had taught. The class was debating the legalization of marijuana.

First, the young legalization advocates laid out various arguments against prohibition, including many of the usual claims. Prohibition doesn't deter people from smoking or growing pot—it funds the much more deplorable activities of criminal gangs who corrupt public officials and import guns and harder drugs. It also wastes taxpayers' money on ineffective enforcement while forgoing billions of dollars in potential tax revenue.

Then the students who opposed legalizing marijuana laid out their case: Legalization of marijuana is simply a wrong-headed idea. Why? Because inevitably it would drive pot prices downward, the government would put outrageous taxes on the stuff, and growers and the local economy generally would suffer as a result.

"You could tell which kids were from growing families," the former teacher told me with an uncertain smile.

This little anecdote symbolizes to me that the marijuana industry has passed the point of no return. The evidence, it seems, is becoming quite clear—somebody stands to make loads of money from drugs like marijuana.

The only real question is who? The answer to this question may have big implications, not just for growers trying to support their families and the local economy, but also for international security and the scope of organized crime.

So, how big is the B.C. pot industry?

Many of us, perhaps without realizing it, know people who have worked in the "bud mines" of B.C. The Fraser Institute estimates there are 17,500 grow-ops in the province, part of a multi-billion dollar provincial industry they estimate could translate into $2 billion of annual tax revenue.

An industry of this size implies tens of thousands of illicit jobs—but that's not to say these jobs are unappreciated.

I asked one person who had grown marijuana plants what he thought of groups like the Hells Angels and his response was a little alarming.

"They make good neighbours," he said.

Basically, he appreciated the role of groups like the Hells Angels in providing law and order in the marijuana trade.

It's ironic, of course, but maybe it makes a bit of sense from a certain viewpoint. With billions of dollars worth of illicit commercial transactions taking place, perhaps it is inevitable that gangs will aspire to keep things running smoothly within whatever turf they can claim.

Not many will trust the RCMP to adequately provide the law and order for them.

But who knows? Maybe in the end, the RCMP will indeed be busting teenagers for stealing their neighbours' pot plants. Maybe this will prove to be the only way for governments to maintain their own turf and shrink the money flowing to organized crime.

About 50,000 Canadians are arrested each year for marijuana-related offences and hundreds of thousands of Canadians already have criminal records for simple possession of marijuana.

The irony is that when drug users reach prison they find that drugs are almost as accessible in jail as they are in the rest of society. If tough enforcement can't even stop the supply of drugs in a prison environment, is there any sense having drug enforcement in the rest of society?

Really, let's get our police officers doing more important work so they can get the respect they deserve.

Indeed, while groups like the Hells Angels may be gaining legitimacy among a few growers, governments, police and other authorities are losing respect on a much larger scale in the eyes of youth and all those who use marijuana or other illicit drugs.

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Give the religious right a chance

Flip-flopping politicians need some values

by David Karp

Politicians today are often considered corrupt, unethical and unprincipled. And frequently, Canadians scorn leaders who mix their religious beliefs with their political beliefs.

But if God is watching over our leaders, maybe the Auditor General can take a few extra days off.

With Stephen Harper now in power, many people are very nervous about what the next few years will bring for Canada. Numerous friends have lamented to me about Harper and Bush's policies, which they claim are fueled by religious values.

But maybe a little religion in politics can be a good thing.

Being raised by a Jewish father and a Christian mother has shown me the values and tolerance that can be fostered through religion.

My parents were able to put their religions aside when it came to raising me, and I was able to get a small taste for two differing faiths.

What I realize when I see my father sitting around the Christmas tree or my mother participating in a Passover seder is that religion doesn't have to be about forcing values upon others. Religion can include respect for others, and more importantly, a basic set of values that guide people through difficult times.

And values are missing from politics today. Too often people tell me they cannot tell the difference between the major political parties. Their stances on issues are alarmingly ambiguous.

This is where religion can make a difference—it has solid principles laid out that can steer decision-making. Faith can help an otherwise flip-flopping politician reach conclusions on issues.

That doesn't mean that religion is intolerant of differing viewpoints. My childhood showed me the exact opposite. If I have one regret from my youth, it would be that I did not learn more about religion.

Without religion, I find myself questioning what is morally right and wrong from time to time. It is these questions within me that often make me indecisive when I need to make decisions. I lose out on the guidance that religious people can turn to.

And indecisiveness is terrible for politicians. Former Prime Minister Paul Martin was nicknamed "Mr. Dithers" by the Economist for his "faltering leadership."

And while Martin is a Christian, he never relied on Christianity to the extent that leaders like Bush have. Perhaps if Martin had turned to his faith, he would have been more decisive and direct in his policy making.

Whether or not political figures like George Bush make leadership decisions based on their religion is insignificant. All leaders have to make decisions, and the process used to reach them is irrelevant. What religion does for Bush is to give him solid principles to base his decisions on and the conviction to fight for those principles.

This is not to say that Christian values are the correct values to hold.

Many people disagree with the teachings of Christ. What I am arguing is that people who bring religion into politics are doing so because they believe in a set of principles. They believe they are right, and they are ready to stand up for what they believe in.

This is an admirable quality in a leader, regardless of their beliefs.

Pakistan betrays its citizens

'Sanctioning foreign attacks on your country only encourages local instability'

by Matthew Gauk

The shadowy "terror" wars in Pakistan are a perfect example of a government selling out its people for short-term profit.

The current war in Afghanistan, like many wars before it, has long been spilling over into neighboring Pakistan. The mountainous tribal regions of Pakistan have become an unofficial war zone of competing tribes, Pakistani government forces, international "jihadists" and American interests (mostly explosives) from Afghanistan.

On the night of Jan. 13, missiles from an American unmanned aerial drone leveled three houses in a small mountain village in Pakistan.

Although purportedly aimed at al-Qaeda's number two, the bombs ended up claiming the lives of 13 civilians (including children) and several suspected al-Qaeda operatives, none of whom ended up being the target, Ayman al-Zawahri.

While the U.S. gave up trying to explain or justify its actions in a reasonable way a long time ago, the Pakistani government spent the next few days trying to come up with a way to communicate to its people why it's letting them be bombed. The Pakistani government spin-doctors immediately went into overdrive, explaining that there were "foreigners" among the dead.

Of course, this doesn't mean that the Pakistani government gave clearance for the attack specifically, just that the U.S. has carte blanche for this type of attack. The air space in the tribal region is open to American jets, and some media reported that the Pakistani government was taken totally off-guard by the attack.

This is a massive violation of national sovereignty. President Pervez Musharraf's military government has an obvious interest in destroying competing power structures, such as the strong Pashtun tribal allegiances.

By encouraging American aggression aimed at al-Qaeda members and by stationing tens of thousands of Pakistani troops in the region, Musharraf reaps the reward of American appeasement and gains the upper hand in the politics of clannish rural Pakistan.

The Pakistani government is breaking its social contract with its people.

From village to state and beyond, people give up their individual rights and freedoms in order to gain the safety and security that government is supposed to provide.

The state is only supposed to sacrifice the lives of its citizens in times of desperate need, when the fate of the state itself hangs in the balance. This principle is often forgotten and sometimes ignored but never so blatantly violated as in situations such as this one.

There's a lesson in here somewhere. The Pakistani government loses face and, by sacrificing its sovereignty, only encourages tribal factions to rebel against government.

Although benefits might be accrued economically and internationally, sanctioning foreign attacks on your country only encourages local instability. This is how people become afraid and distrustful of government.

The same rule applies to countries such as Canada, although to a lesser extent. As responsible citizens we must be aware of our own sovereign rights and where we should draw the line.

Sometimes these incursions aren't as clear as missiles, but come as subtle as manipulation of government policy.

Every time a decision is made in government or a motion passed in Parliament, Canadians need to be certain that it represents that social contract that the Pakistani government has so clearly forgotten.

Multiculturalism is Canada's Achilles heel

by Jared Watson

The year is 1913, the setting: continental Europe.

Continued sabre-rattling between Germany and France has left the continent growing increasingly anxious at the unpleasant prospect of war.

As a movement that believes in anti-militarism and internationalism, the French socialist party has a novel method of preventing war—they encourage the working class to abstain from both military service and arms production.

Being an internationalist movement, they seek to find common grounds with their German counterpart. If the socialist parties of both countries can agree to abstain from war related labour, they can effectively shut down any war between the two countries.

Brimming with confidence, the French socialists travel to Germany to try to convince German workers to embrace the idea of boycotting the looming war. When they arrive, they come to a startling realization. The German socialist party's devotion to the cause is trumped by a conflicting ideology—Nationalism.

Quickly the French realize that if war is declared, German workers will abandon the notion of brotherhood by class and answer their country's call to arms. French socialists are left grappling with the paradoxical notion that the country that would ultimately lose a war would be the one with the stronger socialism.

Fast forward to the year 2006. The country is Canada. Our open immigration system and our mission to promote tolerance have greatly diversified the make-up of our population.

An increasing demographic of Canadian citizens is either newly arrived or first-generation immigrants. This is something we celebrate in Canada. We have opened our arms to our fellow humans and welcomed them into the country to enjoy our way of life while encouraging them to maintain their own heritage. We pat ourselves on the back for having such an enlightened attitude towards people's differences, and rightfully so.

But, there is one nagging concern that is rarely articulated: If this country were to go to war, our policy of multiculturalism could very well turn into our Achilles heel.

I'm not accusing newcomers to this country of having a superficial loyalty that will quickly be jettisoned in a period of war. My concern runs much deeper. Because our policy of tolerance has manifested itself into a form of accommodation that has discouraged us from pushing Canadian traditions on newcomers, we now witness the unfortunate side effect of not encouraging those same traditions in people whose families enjoy a long history in this prosperous nation.

As a result, patriotism (or nationalism in its more malignant form) is at an all time low. I witness proof of this in discussion groups on campus and in conversations with personal friends. The idea of joining the military is laughable to the bulk of the university population—not because the profession is not a respectable, or even admirable, way to make a living—but simply because, "Why would you?"

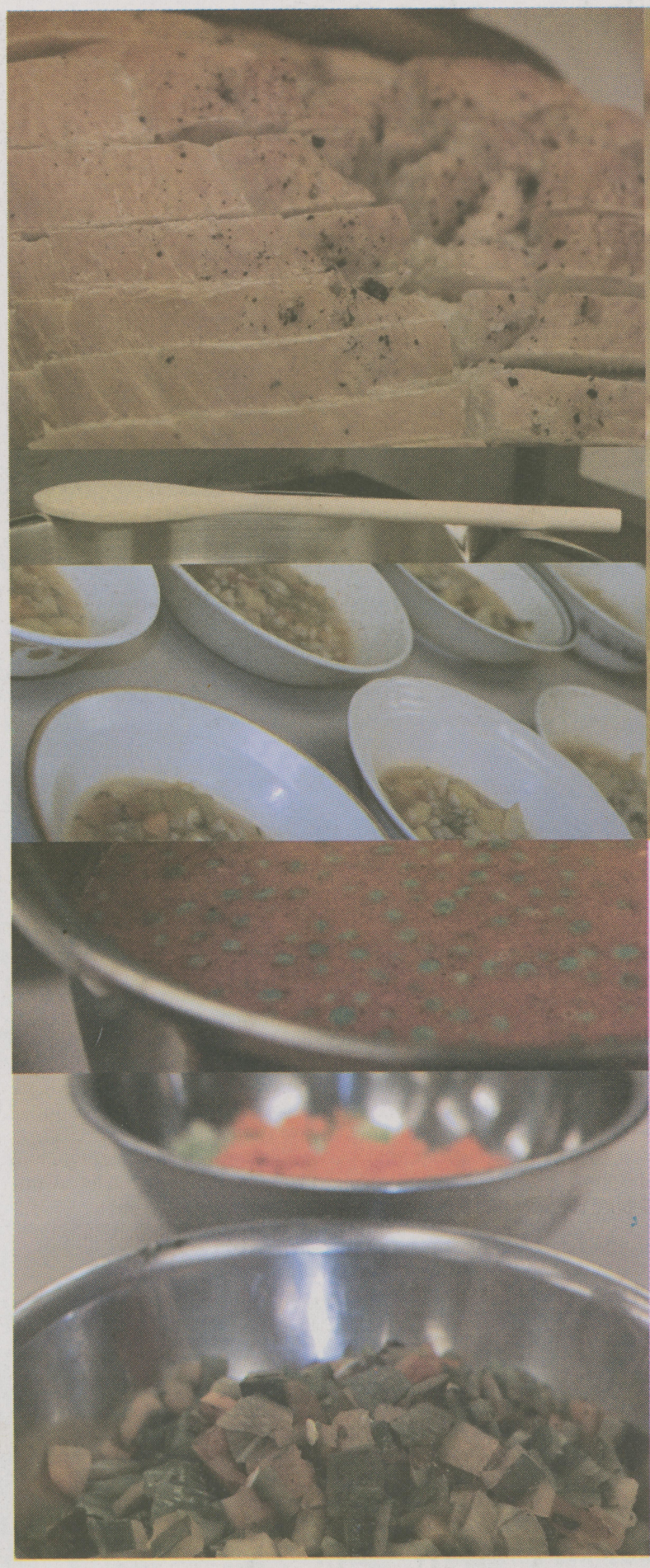
Hopefully a situation never arises where we need to re-evaluate that attitude.

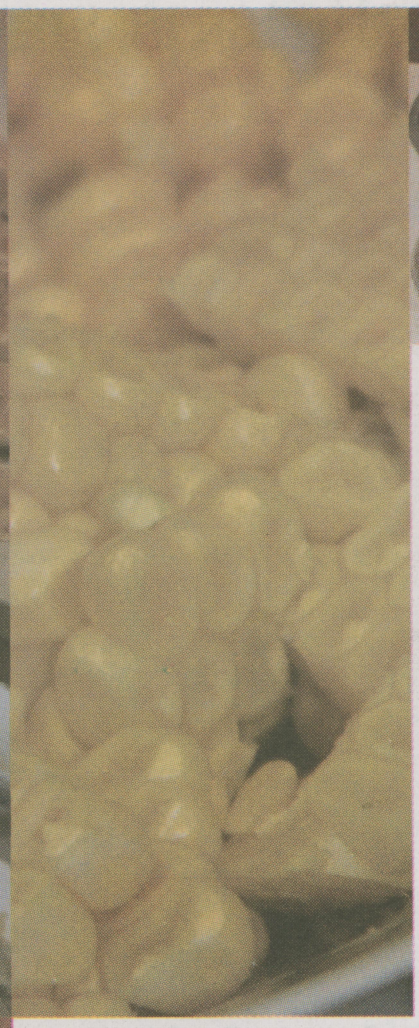
Like the French socialists, we try to spread our ideals of tolerance and diversity to those who could one day be our enemies. But if multiculturalism is rejected in China or the Middle East, what effect will this have?

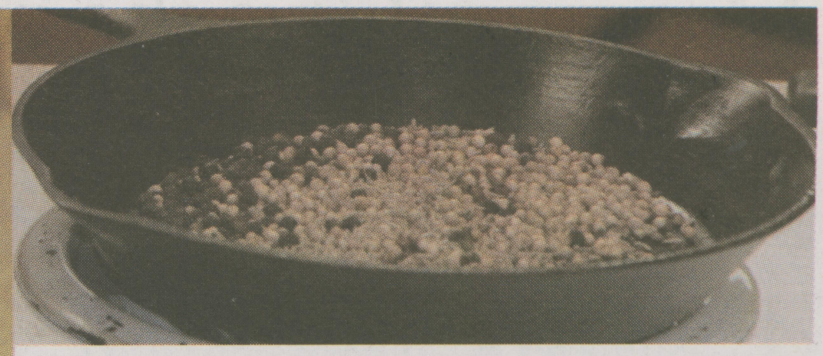
We, in this insulated nation, need to realize that the entire world has not entered our post-modern world where nationalism is a relic of the past. To those nations that do not advance the ideas of tolerance, multiculturalism is seen as a corrupting influence—evidence that the West has become decadent and that our society is decaying.

The paradox we will have to face if we ever go to war is that the country with the stronger multiculturalism will be the one at a strategic disadvantage.

Now many of us would argue that the risk is worth it. Canada won't be going to war anytime soon. Nevertheless, we should all be aware of what the dangers are if war is ever declared.







The Soup Apprentice asks:

What makes a good soup great?

by Heather Bowness
photos by Linley Faulkner

My grandmother's grain mill and tearoom tucked away in the highlands of Scotland drew farmers' stomachs with hot soup and scones. When these burly men, smelling of damp heather and wearing muddy boots, came inside at mid-day, the aroma of hearty soup made the foggy fells soon forgotten. She made thick, chunky, vegetable soup, lentil soup and kale soup. No child likes kale soup, but these men with legs like bridge posts did.

She once told me kale was the only vegetable the Scots had in the winter. "That was before supermarkets," she said. "Children would come home from school for lunch and for the fifth day in a row there was kale soup. They hated it, but they ate it because it was the only greenery they saw for months." After that, I saw kale in a new light.

It has been 15 years since I watched my grandmother walk into the garden with her wellyboots, waist-long chestnut hair wound tightly in a bun, and plunge her hand under a foot of snow to pull up handfuls of dark green kale. My grandmother still makes soup; so does my mother, and now I am learning. It's become a tradition.

Not everyone has two generations of cooks for their inspiration. In our fast-paced world, nutrition and cooking are often swept under the technological rug. Noodle soup from a can and powdered soups with expiry dates worthy of army rations are, if anything, boring. The problem is that many people don't know how to make anything else.

So what makes an excellent soup? To answer this question I attended a soup workshop led by Victoria's renowned vegetarian and ethnic cuisine chef Heidi Fink.

The basic rule is that everything and anything can go into the pot—old mashed potatoes, leftover vegetables, rice, whatever you have on hand. Fink said the great thing about soup is that the vegetables are all interchangeable. Unlike many recipes, which call for exact measurements of obscure and expensive ingredients, soup can be made from anything. A good soup is how you combine the ingredients together, not which ones you choose. Soup "is all about technique," Fink stressed, "and not about the ingredients."

The golden rule of soup is to cook the onions long enough. Fink explained most people don't sauté onions long enough, but this—along with leeks and garlic—is the base of the soup.

"Sauté onions about 10 to 15 minutes until browned, otherwise they'll probably taste like boiled laundry," she laughed. However, garlic should only be sautéed for about 30 to 45 seconds so it doesn't burn.

But the secret to fantastic soup, one that will make your friends think you're planning on applying to *The Apprentice: Martha Stewart* show, is layering. Unlike layers of cake, lasagna and trifle, the layers in soup are indistinguishable to the eye, but imperative for the palate. Eating should be enjoyable, and subtle variations in taste ensure the soup won't be boring bite after bite. The best part is that achieving layers in soup is not as complicated as attempting Martha Stewart's five-tiered wedding cakes.

Fink said that sautéing herbs at the beginning and then adding them at different times throughout the cooking process create different levels of taste. Expanding on this, I sauté garlic but also cut some more up to add with the vegetables later.

While sautéing onions, garlic and herbs seems like a lot of work, soup can take less than an hour to make from start to finish. Soup is basically easy to make. Sauté your onions, garlic and herbs, add the vegetables, more herbs and stock—you can cheat and buy the ready-made broth instead of making your own—simmer for a bit, and you have dinner for a week.

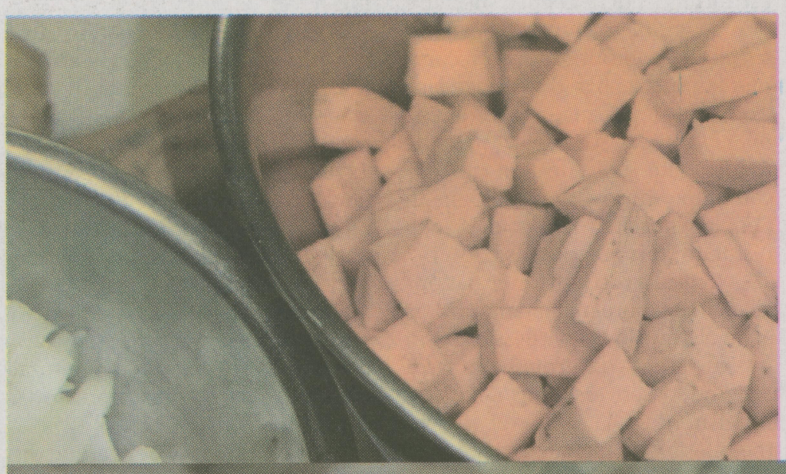
No one actually knows when soup was first created. I always assumed that as soon as fire was domesticated our ancestors would have thought of heating water and meat together. Unfortunately, Homo erectus was still too busy chasing woolly mammoths and running from saber-tooth tigers to be creative about food.

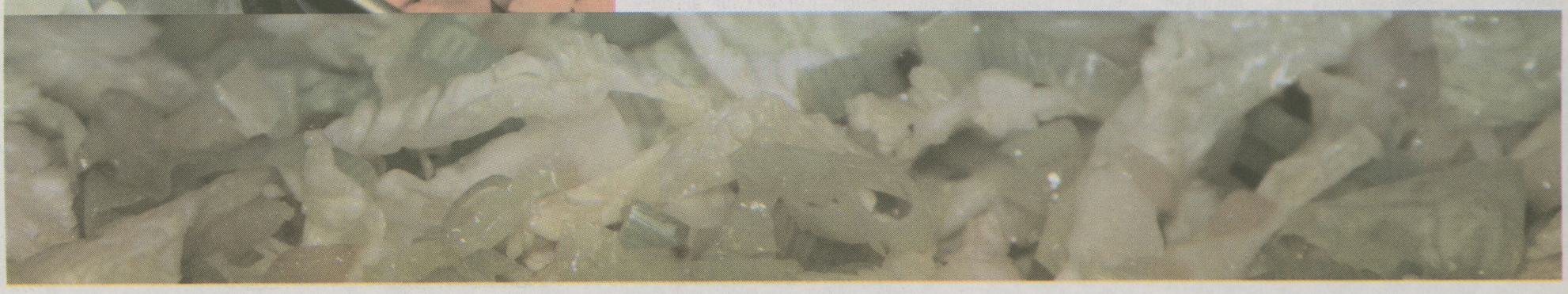
Thus the glory of soup is credited to a younger people, perhaps the Neanderthals, but was likely invented sometime between 80,000 and 10,000 BCE. One theory about the origin of soup is that the Neanderthals, still in the throes of the last ice age, which killed off much of their food source, invented soup out of necessity. Minus the pots needed for soup, they improvised using skins filled with water slung over a fire, or placing a hot stone from the fire into a hole filled with water, adding meat and lentils to make soup.

While our modern world has moved towards creating complex and exotic dishes, the simplicity of soup still permeates every part of our culture as it did thousands of years ago. Every culture has its own staple soup made from domestic ingredients—Hungarian goulash, Polish borscht, Chinese wonton, and Scottish kale soup.

When I moved into my first apartment, my grandmother gave me a slow cooker and my mother gave me a recipe book. There is nothing better than coming home after a long day at school and entering the apartment to the smell of dinner. All you have to do is throw in the ingredients in the morning (or in the evening if you're not a morning person), set the slow cooker on low heat before you leave in the morning, and when you get home you'll have a ready-made meal. If you're cooking with meat, it will be nice and tender. Don't worry, there is no chance of burning the house down, as slow-cookers don't have an open element.

I love to cook and perhaps that makes me old-fashioned, but just as soup is always better after the first day, the more soups I create, the deeper the layers go.



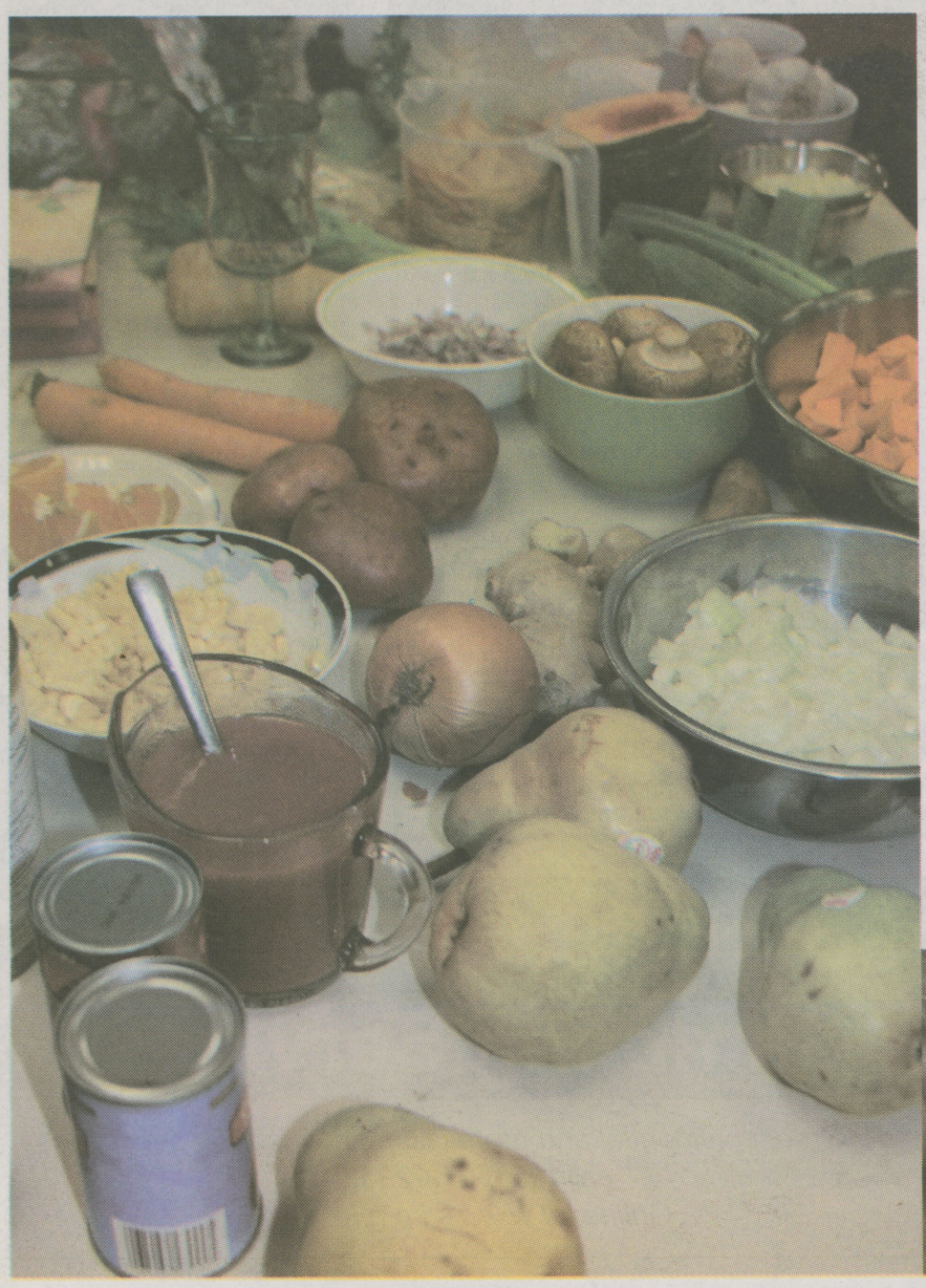


Quick soup tips from Heidi Fink

- Don't sauté onions and garlic at the same time. First sauté the onions for at least 10 minutes. Then add the garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds longer so you don't burn the garlic.
- Leeks, onions and garlic are essential to a good soup.
- Sautéing cabbage and kale brings out both flavours.
- Add herbs at different times during the cooking process. This gives different layers of taste.
- Add tomatoes at the very end because the acid in them will stop the vegetables from softening.
- If you want to freeze your soup, keep in mind that starchy ingredients such as potatoes, pasta and rice don't freeze well. The only exception is yams.
- Parmesan cheese rinds give an extra layer of flavour.
- Cook the fillers (pasta, barley, rice, etc.) separately and add to the soup later—they suck up all the stock.
- Vegetables that create unique flavour: parsnips, kale, spinach and sautéed cabbage.
- Cut up vegetables into small bites. Not only does this allow them to cook faster but also gives multiple tastes in every bite.
- When using bay leaves, break them in half to release more flavour into the soup.

Possible soup ingredients

Parsnips, kale, leeks, old mashed potatoes, barley, old rice, pasta, noodles, frozen vegetables, yam, sweet potatoes, ginger, spices, carrots, celery, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, parmesan cheese rind, other kinds of cheese.
Use your imagination!



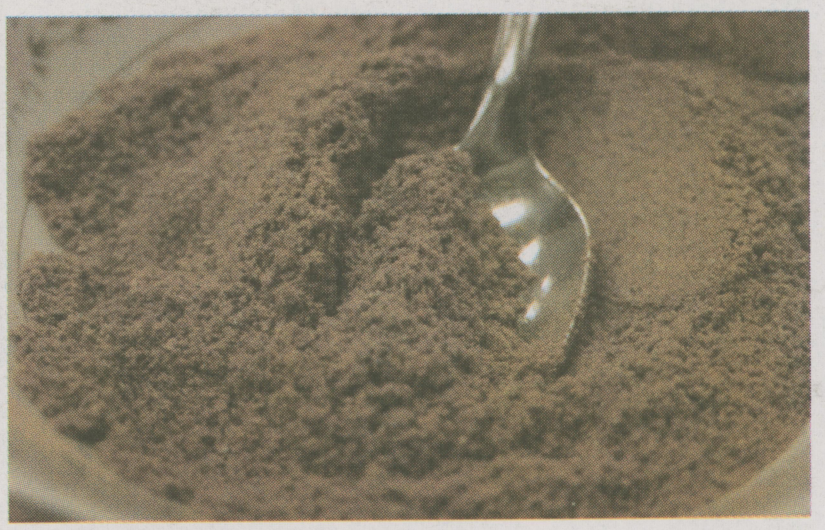
Grandma's kale broth (serves 2)

Ingredients

1.5 L raw kale without stems, chopped and sautéed
1 carrot
celery
whatever other vegetables you have (except peppers)
1 onion
garlic
1 or 2 potatoes
250 mL water
500 mL chicken or vegetable stock (you can use the store-bought kind)

Instructions

1. Sauté kale until wilted, set aside.
2. Sauté onions until brown.
3. Add garlic and kale.
4. Add carrot, potatoes, water and stock.
5. Simmer for half an hour.



Mulligatawny soup by Heidi Fink

Ingredients

Dry spice mix

15 mL whole cumin seed
15 mL whole coriander seed
10 mL whole black peppercorns
5 mL whole cloves
5 mL whole cardamom seed
10 mL ground turmeric
5 mL paprika

Wet spice mix

70 mL peeled fresh ginger chunks
7 cloves garlic, peeled
1 small or large red pepper, seeded
1 jalapeño

Other ingredients

1 large onion, diced
5 mL whole cumin seed
60 mL vegetable oil
5 mL red chile flakes
250 mL canned crushed tomatoes
45 mL tomato paste
10 mL salt
2 L vegetable stock
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 ribs celery, diced
1.25 L peeled and diced yam
250 mL fresh or frozen green peas
45–60 mL fresh lime juice
1 400 mL can of coconut milk
15–30 mL brown sugar
bunch minced fresh cilantro

Instructions

Dry spice mix

1. Heat a small skillet over medium heat. Add all the whole spices and cook, stirring, until the seeds turn a shade darker and emit a nice toasty aroma.
2. Remove spices to a bowl and let cool.
3. Grind to a powder in a coffee grinder.
4. Mix with the ground spices and set aside.

Wet spice mix

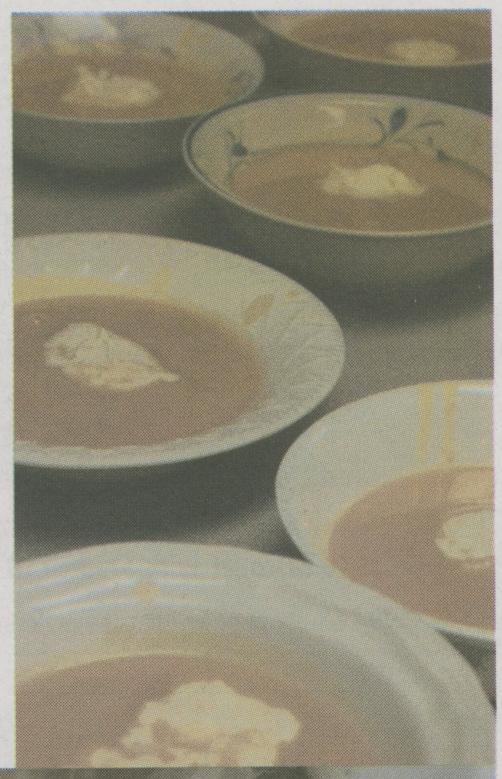
1. Cut everything into pieces about the size of a small clove of garlic and place in the work-bowl of a food processor or blender. Process until you have a paste of uniform texture. If using a blender, you may need to add a little water to get the blades moving.
2. Scrape paste into a small bowl and set aside.

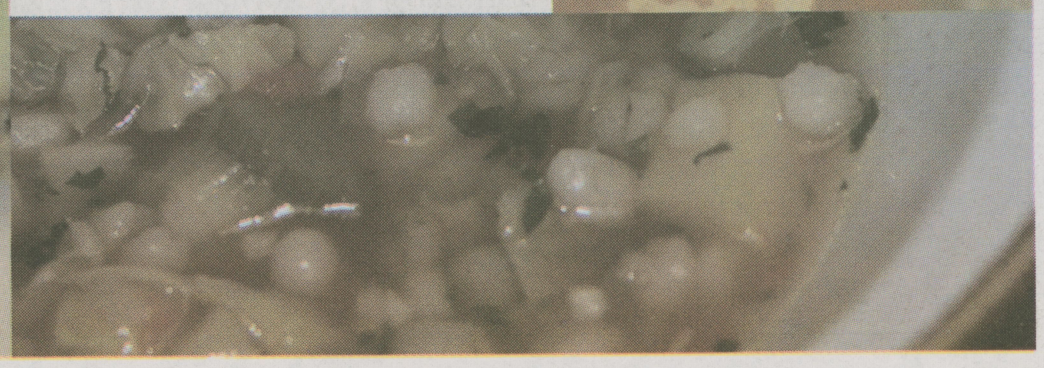
To make soup

1. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, heat vegetable oil on medium-high.
2. Add the whole cumin seed and let sizzle for 10 seconds, then add onion and sauté as long as 10 minutes, until translucent and flecked with brown.
3. Add chile flakes and both spice mixes.
4. Sauté, stirring vigorously, for about 2 to 3 minutes (be careful not to burn the spices).
5. Add crushed tomatoes and salt, reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for at least 5 minutes or until the water in the tomato evaporates and the oil separates and pools on the surface.
6. Add stock and vegetables (except peas). Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 15 minutes, until vegetables are just tender.
7. Add tomato paste, coconut milk, lime juice, brown sugar and peas. Let simmer 3 more minutes.
8. Taste and adjust seasonings. You may want more tomato paste, lime juice, brown sugar or salt.
9. Stir in cilantro and serve immediately.

Baking conversions

5 mL – 1 tsp
15 mL – I tbsp
250 mL – 1 cup
1 L – 4 cups





THEATRE | THE LOVE LIST

Love List an overlong sitcom

The Belfry's production of Norm Foster's romantic comedy plays it for pre-taped laughs

by Briony Smith

What: Norm Foster's *The Love List*
Where: The Belfry Theatre (1291 Gladstone)
When: Until Feb. 19
How Much: $18 to $33 (25 per cent discount for students)

The Love List is like a rerun of one of your old favourite sitcoms. It's simple, funny, and kind of out-of-touch with the real world and what human beings are like. But it sure is cute.

The Belfry Theatre's latest production is about lonely, staid statistician Bill (Rod Beattie), who lives among boxes and stacks of files as dusty as he is. Leon (John Evans), his lecherous novelist pal, gets him a session with a Gypsy matchmaker for his birthday. The two compile their Top 10 list of qualities desirable in a woman, which leads to the magical appearance of Justine (Maria Marlow), a woman who has 'em all.

And that's about it, really. The play does exactly what you'd think. There are some fun zingers bobbing by in the steady stream of universally palatable throwaways (and occasional PG-13 bits) that make it apparent why, in 2006 alone, there will be 40 productions of playwright Norm Foster's 29 plays.

Evans is great—all bluster and pulling faces, a glass of scotch clutched in his hand at all times, while Beattie is wonderful as a semi-loveable nerd stuck in his ways.

Maria Marlow is rather boisterous as the Stepford apparition Justine, her husky voice and red hair adding to the feist factor.

But her character is the weak link in the play. As the perfect woman, she is perfectly annoying—and her constant parade of eye-shielding fifties-inspired suits and ensembles, courtesy of costume designer Karen Levis, only add to the force-five perk assault on the senses.

Her whole shtick is nothing if not predictable—the men's attempts to fine-tune the perfect woman will backfire, and lead to the no-brainer revelation that the perfect woman isn't a real woman.

And Justine certainly isn't a real woman—she's a programmable automaton, which makes it impossible for the viewer to invest anything in her character. While she is in a comedy, the best comedies are funny *and* relatable.

But here Marlow is put through her paces with progressively shriller, faster scenes in which she has to act crazy in a variety of ways, her previous robot-ism amped up to painful levels. This, in addition to the "hysterical" humour of the play, was what attracted Marlow to the role.

"I knew that the many different emotions and number of costume changes that Justine goes through would be a big challenge. You have to go from crying to full-bore excitement. It really took every bit of energy I had—by the end of it, you're drenched with sweat!" she says.

But these are the scenes, even acknowledged by Marlow as "over the top," that play overlong and unsurprising. At two-and-a-half hours, *The Love List* is too lengthy by half for a lightweight comedy.

And that's all it is. Marlow feels that the play comments on how men and women are bombarded by the media with illusory standards for partners and relationships, but that "everyone has flaws and we have to deal with that."

Indeed the premise could have lent itself to an interesting reflection on men's expectations of women, feminism, and the nature of relationships *and* still have been funny. But it is content to unfold exactly as we expect—with all the emotional depth of a *Friends* episode.

While technically a play, *The Love List* is a valentine to television—a sugary, slightly sassy little confection neatly wrapped in a red bow and easily downable for the masses. Unsurprisingly, the play has already almost sold out and been extended for an additional week.

At last—a chance for people to enjoy a night of television out at the theatre.

PROVIDED PHOTO

Maria Marlow (right, as Justine) acknowledges some of the play's sexist undertones.

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Ten days in celluloid

Zombies, butchers and bawdy language at The Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival

by Sacha Narine

PROVIDED PHOTO

Carl Bessai's *Severed* unites loggers and hippies against the extremely slow-moving undead.

It's a lot smaller than the Toronto International Film Festival, and the awards don't measure up to Cannes's Golden Palm or Sundance's Grand Jury Prize.

At 12 years old, the Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival (VIFVF) has a lot of growing to do, but the numbers still sound impressive: 220 volunteers, 15,000 attendees, and 170 films chosen from nearly 1,000 entries.

"Toronto does an amazing job, but we're obviously *so* much smaller," says festival director Kathy Kay. "There's no comparison, really."

On the phone, Kay sounds tired, but insists things aren't too hectic. When asked about last-minute preparations for the opening-night gala, she says, "We just order the [red] carpet. Things are kind of set up ahead of time. . . . It's just one more event."

She's well prepared, having spent countless hours over the last 12 months seeking out fresh, independent filmmaking to showcase at this year's fest. The selections include 49 feature films, 16 of which are Canadian productions.

Severed, the only Canadian entry shot in and around Victoria, is a surprisingly adroit effort from director Carl Bessai, whose last film, *Emile*, starred Sir Ian McKellen. *Emile* took a critical drubbing, but *Severed* is a different animal altogether. Bessai abandons sentimental drama for a quirky, gory, satiric jab at the B.C. lumber industry, all in the form of a traditional zombie movie.

But the film comes dangerously close to remaking Danny Boyle's excellent *28 Days Later*, going so far as to mirror specific death scenes and story events.

Interweaving light satire with heavy gut-splattering and an assured take on the zombie-flick formula, *Severed* still offers a welcome reprieve from the fest's many experimental films and grating attempts at art. (Plus, the film features UVic's Engineering Lab Wing as the logging company headquarters.)

Three films—*Severed*, *FUCK* and *Workingman's Death*—were made available to the *Martlet* before the opening of the festival.

"They're all a very interesting commentary on society," says Kay.

FUCK is a documentary about "looking at something under the microscope," she says. "It's kind of the last taboo word. People are still hesitant to use it."

In the film, comedians, critics, musicians and actors chime in on our favourite four-letter word. Actor/rapper Ice-T explains its importance in the bedroom, during those intimate moments when "your spine comes out the head of your dick." *Ahem*

Not for the easily offended, *FUCK* debates the use of the F-word with some poignant comments from pseudo-intellectual comedian Janeane Garofalo, Christian fundamentalist critic Michael Medved, porn star Ron Jeremy, and other odd and conflicting personalities.

Workingman's Death, a German/Austrian documentary from director Michael Glawogger, shines a light on some of the world's darkest day jobs.

From coal mining in the Ukraine to steelworking in mainland China, Glawogger gets personal with the toughest motherf*ckers on the planet.

It's about "what people have to do in order to make a living," says Kay. "You get tired of watching these poor people."

In one segment, Glawogger documents the daily lives of butchers in Port Harcourt, Nigeria as they slit the throats of goats and steer, arterial blood pumping out onto the feet and hands of disaffected workers (and children). One shot lingers on a small goat kicking and thrashing as its blood soaks into the dirt. "Distressing scenes that are difficult to watch"—that's the apt description printed in the VIFVF program guide.

Among the most high-profile films to be screened are *Tristram Shandy: A Cock and Bull Story*, a self-referential mockumentary about the attempted filming of "an unfilmable novel," Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Director Michael Winterbottom's previous work includes impressive films like *Jude*, *In This World*, and *Code 46*.

Hungary's *Fateless* is another literary adaptation attracting attention, and a B.C. film, *The Life and Hard Times of Guy Terrifico*, is likely to play to packed theatres.

Even if a few seats are empty, the VIFVF isn't exactly struggling. "We're consistently in the black," says Kay. "It's a matter of box office, government sponsorship, and corporate sponsorship."

About 20 per cent of their funding comes from ticket sales, 40 per cent from government sponsorship, and the rest from corporate sponsorship and donations.

If enough Victorians and visitors attend films, forums and panels at the fest's 13 venues, the additional revenue, coupled with donations and sponsorship, will help the festival grow into a more attractive international event.

From Jan. 27 to Feb. 5, Victoria locals and visitors have a chance to see films far different from the standard multiplex fare.

Documentaries from around the world, independent features, artistic (and occasionally excruciating) short films, and other welcome alternatives will be playing at the Odeon, Capitol 6, the Victoria Conference Centre, and other downtown locations.

For more information on the Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival, visit www.vifvf.com, call 250-389-0444, or download a program guide from www.vifvf.com/_program/FilmGuide.pdf

Stimulating

conversation.

Want to start a buzz about the UVic Strategic Plan?

The University of Victoria Students' Society and the University's Planning & Priorities Committee invite you to participate in a Consultation Café on February 2nd, 2006.

President David Turpin will open the café by giving you an overview of the UVic Strategic Plan, *A Vision for the Future,* which is being reviewed by stakeholders this spring as part of a process to renew the plan. We'd like to hear your thoughts on the following questions regarding the future of our university:

1. How can UVic enhance the quality of undergraduate education?
2. How can the student experience at UVic be strengthened?
3. What does UVic offer that is unique and special?
4. What should UVic do to fulfil its goal of being a diverse and welcoming learning community?

This is a great opportunity to listen to your peers and participate in a process vital to UVic.

Who should attend?
Any undergraduate student who would like to participate in a discussion about UVic's strategic plan.

Lively roundtable discussions will be co-hosted by members of the UVSS and the Planning & Priorities committee.

Why?
Your perspective contributes to informed and relevant planning at UVic. It will also influence the type of programs, services and support available to students in the future.

When?
February 2, 2006, 1:00–2:30 PM
Cadboro Commons, McKenzie/Sinclair Room

Seating is limited, so please arrive early.
Refreshments will be served.

Can't make the café? Give us your feedback via email at ppreview@uvic.ca. For further information, please visit the Strategic Review website at uvic.ca/strategicreview or phone the Office of the University Secretary at 721-8102.

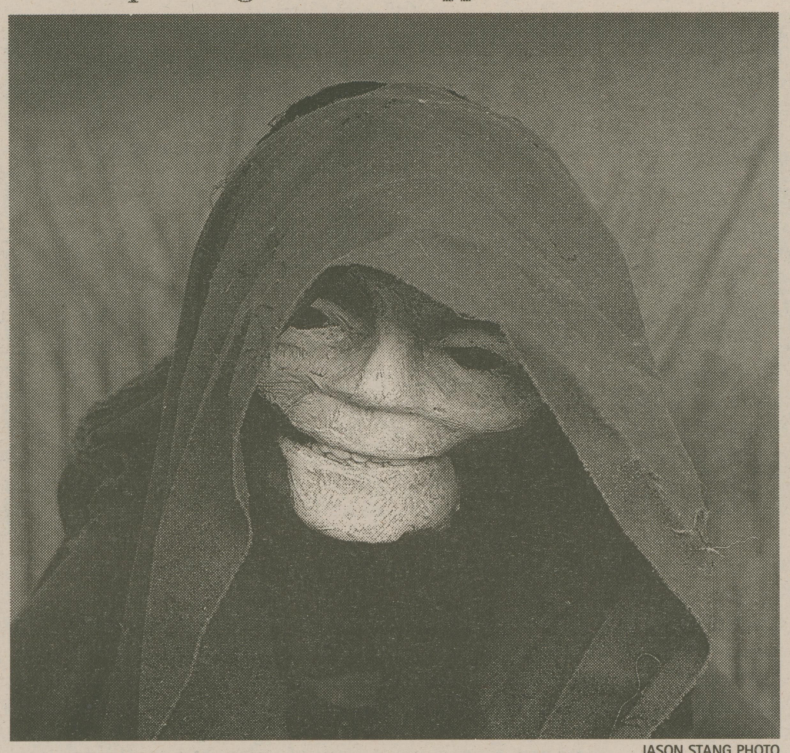
UVSS
University of Victoria

Death and the puppet

Calgary's Old Trout Workshop brings *Famous Puppet Death Scenes* to UVic's Spotlight on Alumni

What: The Old Trout Puppet Workshop's *Famous Puppet Death Scenes*
Where: Phoenix Theatre, UVic (www.phoenixtheatres.ca)
When: Jan. 31 to Feb. 4
How much: $10 to $20
Previews: Jan. 28 and 30 at 8 p.m. ($5 after 5 p.m.)

by Steve Carey



JASON STANG PHOTO

A puppet incarnation of death cuts the threads of fate for *Famous Puppet Death Scenes'* doomed automatons.

Fifty-two deaths in 25 non-linear scenes with the promise of everlasting life.

Sounds spooky, doesn't it?

The Old Trout Puppet Workshop's *Famous Puppet Death Scenes* is coming to UVic as part of this year's Spotlight on Alumni. UVic Theatre grad Peter Balkwill founded The Old Trout Puppet Workshop with Judd Palmer in 1999.

The two were staying in a coal-heated shack on a ranch in Alberta, collecting eggs and feeding pigs to pay their rent. It was a disguised first project.

"The purpose of it was to isolate the group from pop culture and distractions so we would focus solely on a technique and method," says Balkwill; "[a method] that could afford its own breadth without worrying about what was going on around us."

Famous Puppet Death Scenes is hosted by a puppet Master of Ceremonies, who has foraged through junk shops, dime stores and garage sales to gather the actual puppets used in each death scene, who will also die spectacularly.

"It's a collection of [snapshots] from each of the fictional plays. It's the poignant moment of death . . . their crescendo [or] culmination," says Peter Balkwill, on the phone from Vancouver.

The play premiered Jan. 20 at the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival in Vancouver. According to Balkwill, it was well received.

Each year, as part of the Festival of Innovative and New Drama, UVic's Spotlight on Alumni imports a self-sustaining show as a feature on what graduates are doing now.

"I taught at UVic for a year. That was a more auspicious return, rather than bringing back a box of dolls," says Balkwill. "Victoria's a great town for puppets. It's got a European quality that embraces the . . . style of puppetry that we do."

Although the mandate of the Old Trout Puppet Workshop was to use only carved wood, the dolls and single marionette in *Famous Puppet Death Scenes* are built in the style of their fictional creators. They have used vinyl, plastic, Styrofoam and wood to mould the original doll in the image of its maker.

The puppets range in size from three inches to larger than the set itself. The group also created a 40-foot-high (12 metres) wind-powered clock with puppet elements commissioned by Alberta's Big Rock Brewery.

Old Trout puppeteers have served as puppet masters on Disney sets, worked on puppet operettas and traveled the world with a Punch and Judy show in a suitcase.

"[The Old Trout Puppet Workshop] operates as a concession. We strive to be collaborative as a group, not follow just one person's vision," says Balkwill.

The current show uses four of the Old Trout puppeteers: Peter Balkwill, Pityu Kenderes, Judd Palmer and Don Brinsmead. The group also brings in outsiders, working with guest lighting designers and directors on a show-by-show basis.

Famous Puppet Death Scenes' sound designer, UVic grad Mike Rinaldi, was in Balkwill's acting class. Director Tim Sutherland was a high-school friend and is also a UVic grad and sessional instructor.

The Old Trout Puppet Workshop has performed six main-stage plays, including versions of *Beowulf* and *Pinocchio*. This is the third time the troupe has performed in Victoria—previously, they performed *The Last Supper of Antonin Carême* and *The Unlikely Birth of Istvan*, a show described as "part [Samuel] Beckett, part Sesame Street."

"Puppets are interesting in the way that they can explain metaphysical questions," says Balkwill. "They don't provide the answers, but they can shape the question. If you shape the question, then maybe you can start finding a personal answer."

Old Trout Judd Palmer has also written five children's books (all available at Chapters, for those interested), and the team offers workshops on full-mask acting and puppet construction.

For more information about the troupe, a free pre-show lecture is offered Friday, Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. in the Phoenix Theatre.
Check out www.theoldtrouts.org for further details.

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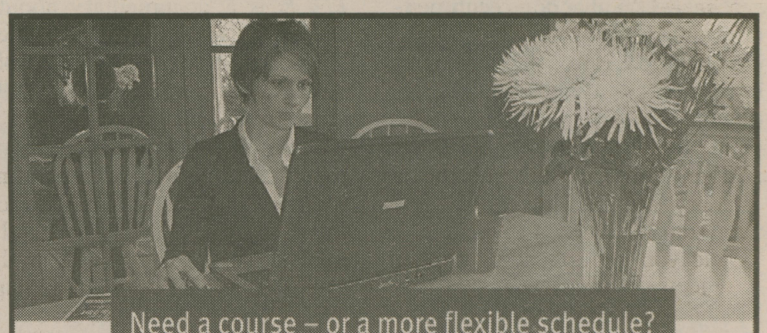
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BAND PROFILE | JAY DUNPHY AND THE RELIGION

Local songwriter on barroom culture and 'alt-fuckin'-country'

by Jessica Smith

Jay Dunphy tosses his cigarette and walks into the coffee shop. He's "five-foot-four, a buck-twenty and pretty volatile" according to his MySpace.com blog, and the headphones, greasy shag and leather jacket scream musician.

He talks a mile a minute and can't seem to keep still—his hands bounce around his lap as he flips between honesty and sarcasm.

"Well, there were a few prostitutes, and the cocaine," he says. "No, no, no there wasn't. There were a few drunken nights. And it's not like we were playing to a full crowd, and it's not like we've got little groupies coming up and flashing us or anything, asking us to sign them."

Dunphy's serious about touring, if not about the prostitutes. He's traveled "to the bowels of Alberta and back" and is planning a cross-country tour with his alt-country/folk band Jay Dunphy and The Religion this spring. "It's the reason I keep on going," he says.

"Honestly, I'll play with anyone, [and] I'll play anywhere."

Dunphy strives for "emotional and lyrical honesty," but he knows his voice "ain't pretty." He says he's compared to Bob Dylan all the time for his untrained snarl and for playing "three-chord folk" centered on the barroom themes of lust and life experience.

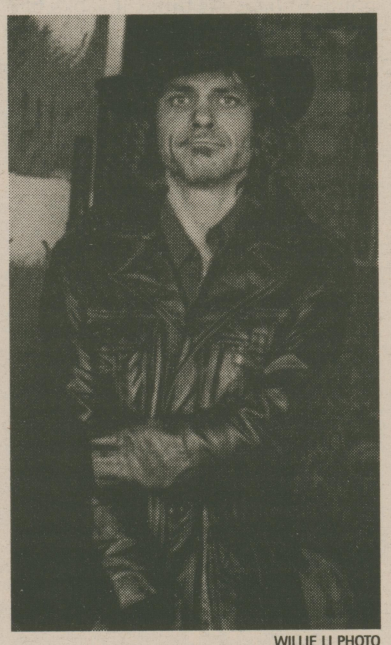
But there's one aspect of barroom culture that Dunphy doesn't participate in.

"As far as that whiskey and cigarette routine goes, I don't know if I want to be synonymous with it," he says. "Honestly, I don't even drink, and the whole smoking shtick is kind of silly, but I do [it]. I smoke."

When the conversation turns to why he quit drinking, Dunphy jokes again. "Oh, I was a drunk," he laughs. "No, no, no. Alcohol just doesn't suit me. I do kind of a 180 when I drink. I learned all too late that it probably wasn't too good for me."

He hasn't had a drink in two years, but quitting wasn't hard—it was a relief. After suffering through a massive four-day hangover in Thailand, Dunphy decided he just didn't want to drink any more.

He also talks about a "breakdown-slash-regrowth period" six years



WILLIE LI PHOTO

Singer/songwriter Jay Dunphy.

ago, when he quit his job, went back to school and started singing.

Now Dunphy works at a group home for autistics, and he enjoys it despite the occasional challenge.

"When shit hits the fan, these guys are 255 pounds, and I'm not," he says. "But it's like any relationship—you get really attached, and the people become a part of your life. There's an element of paternal instinct that kicks in, and damned if the guys I work with aren't fun."

Dunphy keeps an online MySpace blog, and his sentiments have elicited some concern among friends.

"I'm honestly about five-foot-four and just below 120 pounds . . . I hit anything, but really, the only thing that [satiates] is hitting 'face,'" he writes. "I actually kinda 'black-out.' It's like something inside me 'snaps' and I usually don't come to until I'm sitting on some unsuspecting person's chest bashing their face with my bloodied knuckles."

Only after several friends post their heartfelt concerns about his mental health does Dunphy question his own sarcasm. Not everyone gets the joke, but a lot of people read it.

"I'm a bit of MySpace slut," says Dunphy, who has 324 MySpace friends, including almost everyone involved in Victoria's live music scene.

The next night, the scene is at Steamer's Pub, and Dunphy continues networking, walking around the crowd like a politician, giving hugs and propers and shaking hands—at least half of the crowd knows him by name.

David Chenery, Annie Nolan, and Seattle's Chuckanut Drive open the show. Dunphy joins Annie Nolan for Ryan Adams' "Oh My Sweet Carolina," and—with drinks in hand, swaying on their feet—Chuckanut Drive joins Jay and The Religion for "You Can't Always Get What You Want." Dunphy looks surprised: "You guys have apparently had a few scotch," he laughs.

The crowd is small, but eager. One girl reaches onstage to grab Dunphy's pant leg as he sings, while another girl professes her love. Some people dance, some raise their pitchers in appreciation, and quite a few couples make out to "Diggin' My Own Grave," a "power ballad" released last week on the Cavalcade of the Scars compilation disc.

Dunphy seems to enjoy it.

"Damned if that don't put the country in alt-fuckin'-country," he yells, launching into the next song.

Importing Mexican art (and artists)

What: "Corporeality: Real and Imagined" art exhibit
Where: UVic Visual Arts Gallery
When: Jan. 19 to Feb. 10
How much: Free

by Micah Luxen

When you carefully cut the art gallery out of Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico, and set it up at UVic, you end up with "Corporeality: Real and Imagined."

The art display, in the main gallery of the Visual Arts Building, celebrates the exchange between the two universities, which kicked off Jan. 19 at a videoconference between UVic and Veracruzana. During the conference, both universities shared words of encouragement and examples of their own art.

"We're dealing with a dynamic and different culture so we can enrich our minds and our hearts through international cooperation," said Dr. Giles Hogya, dean of Fine Arts. "They have things to offer us, and we have things to offer them."

But not every artist found it encouraging.

"I think the art should take more precedence over the congratulations for the people who aren't even making the art but [are] just the chair of such-and-such-department," said fourth-year painting student Chad Dever. "I don't think there's much need for that, and I think it kind of takes away from the work because it gives a not-so-happening slant to the entire scene."

The videoconference presentation included video clips, music and poetry recitals from Canada and Mexico, translated into both Spanish and English.

Photographs, paintings and drawings from Mexican art students lined the walls of the building's main gallery.

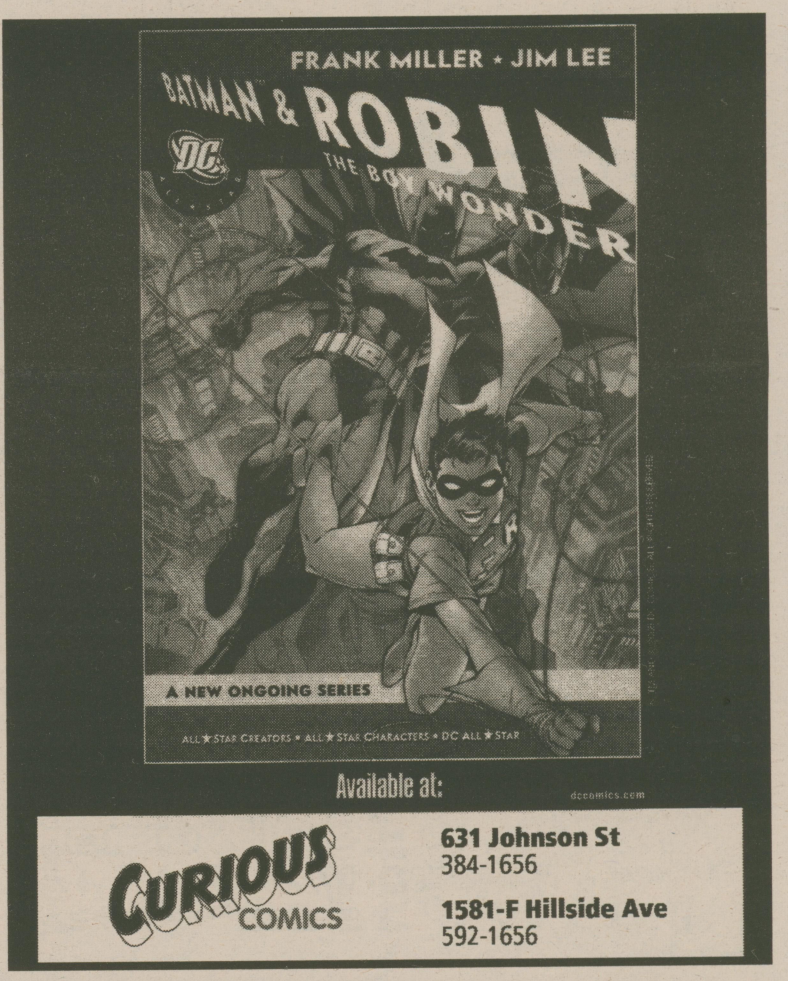
"What I found in these particular photographs was a rural quality rather than an urban quality," said Allan Stichbury, professor of fine art. "Personally I like portraits very much and found these particular ones to be very good. They seemed to capture the essence of the people and the situations."

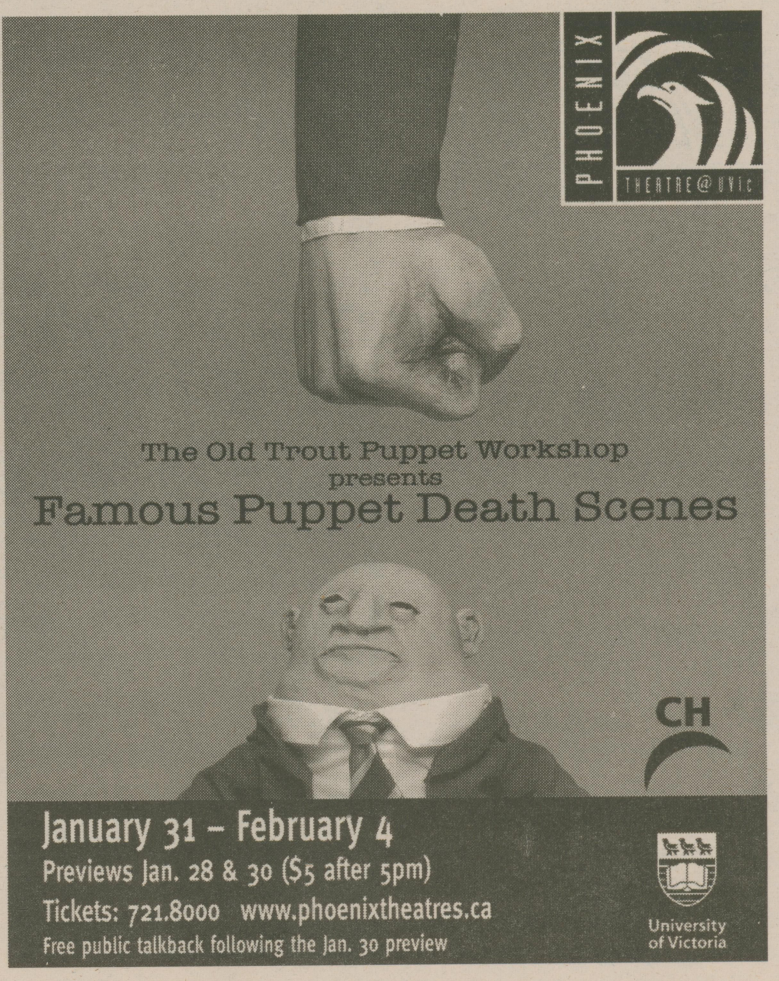
The Veracruzana-UVic art exchange is possible largely because the two institutions have similar art departments and objectives. In the future, students will exchange in programs including theatre, music, art history, and writing.

From an artistic point of view, studying outside of Canada offers local artists a whole new perspective.

"It's great to experience the iconography and the imagery . . . as well as the culture that is alive and well in Mexico," said Dever. "When you are able to step outside of your culture, you see how we are controlled and what biases [influence] us socially. Art, being a part of the social context, is also a part of social control."

The Fine Arts department has made exchanges with Thailand since the late '90s and hopes to build relationships with more international institutions.





MOVIE | THE MATADOR

A refreshingly humane hit man movie

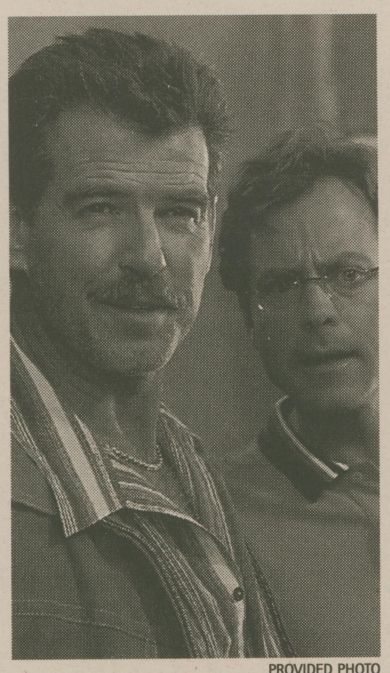
by Kate Webb

Pierce Brosnan takes a step down from his suave shaken-not-stirred lifestyle for something lower, sleazier, and much funnier in *The Matador*.

Although audiences may think they've seen it all in the oft-formulaic sub-genre of hit man movies, *The Matador* delivers a twisted take on the cold-hearted world of trained assassins and emerges as something darkly warm and fuzzy.

The film hinges on a chance meeting at a bar between Brosnan and Greg Kinnear, playing a businessman from Denver desperate to make a deal on a trip to Mexico City.

Brosnan plays an aging, tequila-soaked and over-tanned professional killer on the verge of a nervous breakdown. With his '70s porn-star moustache and somewhat softened physique, Brosnan paints an unflinching picture of a lonely and flawed character, who casually refers to himself as a "facilitator of fatalities."



PROVIDED PHOTO

Brosnan (left) and Kinnear.

The Matador's greatest strength is its script, full of amoral jokes about Bangkok hookers and comically awkward moments between Brosnan and Kinnear.

Strong performances from both actors keep us guessing about which direction their relationship is going to take. At times it looks like friendship—at others, it could turn sexual or even violent.

Hope Davis brings a sweet sidenote to the film as Kinnear's doting but adventurous wife. The pair gets sucked into the hit man's crazy scheme, à la *The Whole Nine Yards*, but with a far less predictable outcome.

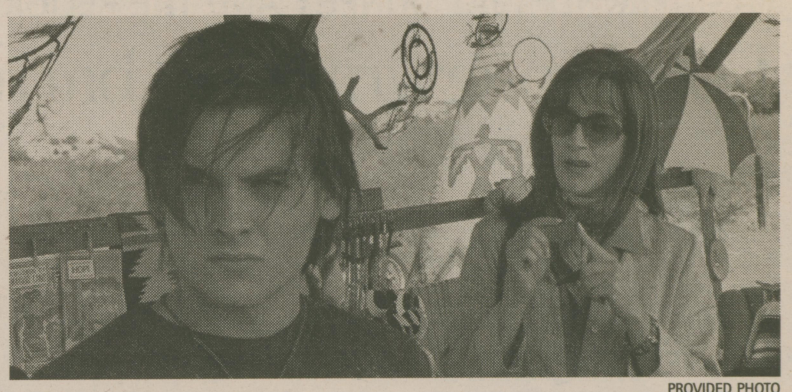
As a bonus, the film offers a colourful world tour on the heels of Brosnan's antihero, Julian Noble, as he skips from city to city across Europe and Asia. Director Richard Shepard uses balance and symmetry in his shots, and he frequently drops in sweeping overviews of exotic venues, such as the bullring that inspires the film's title.

The underlying theme is the question of what a healthy balance between brutality and mercy might look like, if such a thing exists. This idea is expressed in microcosm by a debate between Brosnan and Kinnear during a bullfight, as the hit man tries to convince his companion there is more honour in killing a bull with one jab than with 20.

The Matador's momentum starts to slip towards the end, but a surprising and emotional performance from the usually composed Brosnan saves it at the last minute.

Ultimately, this turns out to be one of the best comedies for adults since *Sideways* or *Matchstick Men*. For those who squirm at the sight of a flying bullet, *The Matador* manages to deal with its trigger-happy genre in a refreshingly humane way.

MOVIE | TRANSAMERICA



PROVIDED PHOTO

Canadian Kevin Zegers (left) with star Felicity Huffman.

Trans road trip plays it safe

by Briony Smith

Transamerica is like a puppy—it's kind of cute and means well, but its cloying cuddliness and scrabbling for attention get old after a while.

The Weinsteins have spared no expense in parading their very first show pony through all the indie festival circuits, and marketing it with a series of upbeat ads that give away most of the movie's good punchlines. To review—Desperate Housewife Felicity Huffman plays Los Angelino Bree Osbourne, a pre-op trans-woman who, just shy of her gender-reassignment surgery, gets a call from a jailed young man claiming to be her son.

Under the gun from her psychiatrist to get the matter resolved before her surgery, Bree books it to New York, where she poses as a Christian missionary, bails him out, and begins a cross-country journey filled with hijinks, revelations, and bonding—one of the easiest outs for first-time feature screenwriters looking for a simple linear story progression.

Much has been made of Huffman's turn as a woman playing a man living as a woman who becomes a biological woman. Her performance as a trans-woman is convincing, and she has some nice moments of dry humor, such as when she responds to her son's comment on how her parents' house is nicer than hers: "My parents' house comes with my parents."

But the script also burdens her with jarring personality traits; ostensibly used to "build" her character, they come off as weird. She speaks in a strangely formal manner, her diction elevated and peppered with encyclopedic entries like New Mexico's status as the capital of ufology, or the noting of someone's "matrilineal kinship lines."

She also dresses like The Church Lady from *Saturday Night Live*. Bree isn't a completely hollow character, but she doesn't have the deep resonance of Hilary Swank's transman in *Boys Don't Cry* or the transwoman played by Jaye Davidson in *The Crying Game*. If she wins the Academy Award this year, it will be a case of slim pickin's, or the fact that for every inch of prosthetics Huffman wears, her Oscar chances go up 20 per cent.

Her onscreen son, Toby, played by Canadian Kevin Zegers, never gets fleshed out in a satisfactory way. Again, Zegers is competent in his portrayal, but does nothing to set himself apart from the legions of sullen movie teens that have come before.

Ditto for the broad caricatures of Bree's family, which includes the grotesque Fionnula Flanagan as her golden-brown track-suited mother dutifully outfitted with a supply of stupid, cutting, insensitive things to say until the plot calls for her third-act change of heart.

One of the only characters who seems like he might have wandered in from a more thoughtful film is fellow Canuck Graham Greene as a rancher with a crush on Bree. Here, for once, screenwriter/director Duncan Tucker plays it subtle, their flirtation mature and realistic. (Greene's point of view about cowboy hats is laugh-out-loud funny.)

These nice moments are few and far between in a film that is seldom graceful or unexpected, and isn't above a cop-out or two. Toby's discovery of who Bree really is, for example—full-frontal nudity and all—allows Tucker to bypass actually having to write a scene in which Bree tells Toby about her gender. Tucker pulls the same cheap trick a second time when revealing Toby's parentage. Add in lines like, "[Hurting is] what hearts do," and you've got one lazy auteur.

Tucker is clearly willing to settle for competency in lieu of greatness. While it's wonderful to see a movie that brings trans issues to a broad audience, it's a shame they are borne on such mediocrity.

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For sale: Adventure

Cash-strapped students can forage equipment at UVic Scuba Club gear swap

by Anna Czolpinski

ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

Adventure sports are as expensive as they are addictive. But once the cheque clears for the gear, the rest is as good as free.

"One harsh reality of technical adventure sports is the high cost of equipment. Luckily, more often than not, once you are equipped for the sport your costs are next to nothing," said Kevin Stuart, president of UVic's Scuba Club.

Jeff Samuel with the Surf Club shares this opinion. "Yes, the initial cost will scare some people away, but once you have put down the initial investment, it becomes virtually free.

"Carpooling out to the beach may set you back about $10, and a burger and fries another seven . . . [but that's a] small price to pay for a day on the ocean."

Since access to rivers, oceans and lakes is free most adventurers face little more than the cost of gas. The challenge, however, is getting involved in the first place, as the gear itself can bankrupt most students.

"Adventure is addictive, and most people that get into a sport like diving will want to try others such as kayaking, surfing or climbing," said Stuart, one of the organizers behind a massive gear swap Feb. 1 at UVic. "So until you start making the big bucks, buying used gear is the way to go."

The organizers behind the Wind, Water, Earth Gear Swap, aim to put adventure sports gear into the hands of students who otherwise couldn't afford a single fin, never mind the gear needed to snorkel the Pacific's kelp beds.

"Anyone with gear is welcome to sell, but be prepared to haggle," said Stuart. "Everybody is after a good deal."

A new kayak costs over $1,000, while used ones are in the range of $300 and up.

Other equipment essential for safe paddling includes PFDs, helmets, splash jackets, spray skirts and wetsuits. Brand new, this equipment can add up to thousands, but almost all the gear can be bought used.

Scuba diving is another sport that requires a great deal of expensive and highly technical gear. A popular Victoria retailer said scuba equipment is nothing if not steep, and ran off a list of expenses: cylinder $250; buoyancy compensator $400–$1,300; regulator $750–$2,500; a set fins, mask and snorkel $250–$350; wet suit approximately $400; about $2,000 for a dry suit .

But if you're is prepared to dig around, $4,000 worth of new scuba gear can cost a fraction of the price used.

"With most gear what you see is what you get," said Ben Bagerson, president of UVic's Scuba Club. According to Bagerson, if kayaking equipment has no holes, tears or other visible damage, then it is generally usable and safe. He does, however, advise avoiding helmets that have seen heavy wear.

Samuel said that the secret to finding suitable second-had gear lies in the details and the fit.

"Take an extra minute checking out seams on wetsuits or [ask] does the board have too many dings or has it become spongy. [With] a little bit of research and a keen eye, anybody should have good success in buying used equipment," he said.

"Probably the biggest downfall in buying used gear isn't a matter of malfunction—but in whether the gear is right for you. Does the suit fit?"

Another example of a gear-intensive sport is the triathlon, where each sport—swimming, biking, and running—requires its own set of equipment.

Rhodes Brown, with the UVic Triathlon Club, said a road racing or triathlon-specific bike and the associated gear is the largest expense.

Quality bikes start at $1,000 and add-ons include spare bike parts and tools, aero-handle bars, fenders for winter riding, helmets, computer or electrical gadgets, and clothing.

While a wet suit is not strictly necessary, it does expand where an athlete can compete.

Largely because of its mild weather, Victoria is a very active city. This translates into a good market for used goods that extend to a wide variety of year-round outdoor sports.

The city has become somewhat of a mecca for sports like rowing, triathlon and cycling. Many pro-athletes make Victoria their training ground, which means there are deals to be had.

"Pros usually get a bunch of gear they don't want or can't use," said Brown. "Many are happy to sell it off at bargain-basement prices."

The Wind, Water, Earth Gear Swap takes place Feb. 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Michele Pujol Room. To reserve a table, contact Kevin Stuart at kns@uvic.ca.

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OLYMPIC WARM-UP | SLIDING AND SKIING

Exorcising the failures of Olympic past

A powerful Canadian skeleton team looks to make amends for their disappointing perfomance in Salt Lake City

by Gavin Day

Biathlon

Biathlon is an incredibly difficult discipline to master and demands that competitors "go from rabbit to rock in 15 seconds." Athletes must control their heart rate to not compromise their shooting accuracy with heavy breathing.

Canada has not won any medals in biathlon since Miriam Bédard won double gold in Lillehammer in 1994. This drought should continue in Torino, but the future is looking bright.

A program through Biathlon Canada to identify potential future medalists is paying dividends. Zina Kocher recorded a seventh place on the World Cup tour this season and is a definite future talent.

Veteran skier Robin Glegg leads the men's team and hopes to perform well after no Canadian men were in Salt Lake City four years ago.

The man to watch will be Norway's Ole Einar Bjoerndalen. In the biathlon world, he is a legend and could win multiple gold medals.

On the women's side, Kati Wilhelm and Uschi Disl lead the powerhouse German team.

Luge

In women's luge, only Germany has won World Cup races over the past few years. Silke Kraushaar and Sylke Otto are almost unbeatable.

Calgary's Regan Lauscher came close to ending the unbeaten streak last season when she posted a silver medal at a World Cup event, but she will need to pull out something special to defeat the Germans.

In the men's events, Italian Armin Zoeggeler is the favourite to repeat as gold medalist. The 2002 Olympic champion is also a five-time World Cup champion. Albert Demtschenko of Russia is a strong threat to Zoeggeler as is German legend Georg Hackl.

Canadian Jeff Christie posted the best-ever result for a Canadian when he came seventh at the World Championships last year. He will look to gain experience for Vancouver in 2010.

In the doubles luge, the two best sledding tandems in the world are German, but the Italians, Americans and Austrians are also fielding strong teams. For Canada, brothers Chris and Mike Moffat have returned to the sport after taking some time off. A top-10 performance is expected of them.

Skeleton

The powerful Canadian team wants to make amends for their performance four years ago. Going into Salt Lake, Canada was favoured to win medals in a number of events but came away emptyhanded. Jeff Pain is the World Cup points leader and will be the favourite in Torino. Forty-year-old Duff Gibson looks to end his prestigious skeleton career on a high note, and a medal is certainly within his abilities. The Swiss, Germans and Americans will all challenge for top spot.

Melissa Hollingsworth-Richards of Canada is the current World Cup leader, but Lindsay Alcock is also favoured to medal. If she is healthy, Michelle Kelly finalizes the strong trio of Canadian sliders. These three women are consistently seen on the podium at important events. Teams from the U.S., Great Britain and Switzerland will play a factor.

Freestyle Skiing

The Canadian freestyle team continues to be one of the best in the world.

In women's moguls, Jenn "Mighty Mouse" Heil would like to add an Olympic gold to her World Cup championship from last season.

Her main competition will be Norwegian veteran Kari Traa.

The women's aerials team may be peaking at just the right time. The 2001 world champion, Canadian Veronika Bauer, may finally be overcoming problems with consistency in landing her jumps and she could figure in the medals.

Quickly becoming Canada's comeback darling, Deidra Dionne is back on the circuit after breaking a bone in her back in September. A medal for her would be a remarkable performance. The Chinese women will be a very tough team to beat with Nina Li leading their charge.

The Canadian men's mogul ski team is going through a bit of a rebuilding phase.

PROVIDED PHOTOS

Jeff Bean (left) says he'll have to accomplish "a quintuple twisting triple back flip with three twists in the second flip" to win gold in Torino. Jenn Heil (right), the first Canadian woman to take the '04 and '05 World Cup mogul titles, is favoured for Olympic gold.

Eighteen-year-old Alexandre Bilodeau is Canada's best shot at a medal. Toby Dawson of the U.S. and former Canadian team member Dale Begg-Smith seem to have momentum heading into the games.

The only word to use to describe the Canadian men's aerials team is dominant. Canada's four representatives Steve Omischl, Jeff Bean, Warren Shouldice and Kyle Nissen could all be standing on top of the podium.

A Canadian sweep of the medals is even a possibility.

Their competition should come from the Americans and Dmitri Dashinski of Belarus.

Bobsled

Veteran pilot Pierre Lueders used to be a two-man bob specialist. He has recently emerged as a top four-man pilot over the past few years.

As a result, he will be a strong medal bet in both disciplines.

Lueders has one of the best brakemen in the business, Lascelles Brown, who competed with Jamaica four years ago but looks to win gold with Canada.

On the women's side, Helen Upperton and Heather Moyse look to make history as the first Canadian medalists in women's bob.

They recently won their first World Cup event and hope to carry that momentum into Torino.

The favourite is Sandra Kiriasis of Germany, who would like to return to her usual spot on top of the podium.

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THE SPORT OF TALK

NFL spoils its teams with billions in shared profit

by Iain Jeffrey

For those of you that don't understand football and think the NFL is full of overweight "athletes" observed every week by overweight armchair quarterbacks—take a minute to learn about the league's impressive system of revenue sharing and gain some insight into the best managed sports league in North America.

On Sunday Feb. 5 the Seattle Seahawks will play the Pittsburgh Steelers in the Super Bowl. Pittsburgh and Seattle, though both passionate football cities, have never been league powerhouses when it comes to revenues. In fact, both teams have been outside the top-ten money-makers during the past decade.

Between the 32 NFL teams, revenues last year totalled $5.2 billion (all figures US dollars).

This gargantuan number makes the NFL the largest grossing professional sports league on the continent, with the MLB collecting just over $4 billion in 2004 and the NBA collecting between $2.5 and $3 billion in each of the last three seasons.

Collectively, ABC/ESPN, Fox and CBS paid the NFL $2.8 billion to broadcast this past season—compared to the NHL's three-year $200 million deal with Comcast and a $60 million contract this season with NBC.

Any two NFL teams will collect more money from American TV deals this season than the whole of the NHL.

Not only does the NFL enjoy more revenue than the other leagues, it is also does a much better job of sharing the spoils.

NFL teams evenly split their national TV contract money. Revenues from playoff ticket sales as well as merchandise royalties are also divided evenly amongst the franchises. Of the $5.2 billion in total league revenues, approximately $3 billion is shared between the 32 teams.

Each team's salary cap is determined by a set percentage of the preceding year's revenues. This season's salary cap was just over $80 million , and since each team began the season with $100 million , each team kicked off the season with more money from the league than needed to pay its players.

Wow.

The relative economic equality of the NFL gives most teams a chance to win every year, ultimately making the league unpredictable.

The NFL is notorious for teams turning themselves around after a bad season and coming back the next year to compete in the playoffs.

In 2002 the highest estimated team revenues belonged to the Washington Redskins at $227 million , while the lowest grossing team was the Atlanta Falcons at $126 million . The Falcons were one of 12 teams to make the playoffs that year while the Redskins were excluded from the postseason with a record of 7-9.

Because of these economic factors, the success of an NFL franchise often comes down to effective management.

It is comforting for football fans to know that at any time their general manager may make a personnel move that could change the direction of the team.

Since each team will be spending approximately the same amount of money on their players, fans know that shrewd manoeuvres in signing, trading and releasing players will determine the success of their team. Meanwhile, baseball fans in small-market cities know that the spending power of their franchise will not match that of the New York Yankees and they will have to compete at a perpetual disadvantage.

It is tempting to say that every sports league should adopt a similar attitude towards revenue sharing. The reality is that the NFL is substantially more popular than other major sports leagues in North America and has substantially more money to play with.

The NFL system is fantastic, but it only works because of the millions of people who watch games on TV and at the stadium, and buy jerseys, jackets and hats emblazoned with NFL team logos.

Economics aside, football is a truly American game. With all the play stoppages the NFL is made for TV and allows for copious amounts of sponsorship and advertising. Globally the NFL is associated with only one country, hence the phrase American Football.

Viewers also get to watch the risk-laden collision sport. The appeal of the league reaches all corners of the States, which only adds to the NFL's unparalleled economic rewards in North American sport.

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VOLUNTEERS WANTED

WANTED AND APPRECIATED: volunteer childcare assistants at Kiwanis House playing with children while their parents participate in life skills, parenting and pre-employment training creating a better life for themselves and their children. Contact Rachel Calder at 382-1004 or khp@youthoutreach.ca

Seize the moment - new skills, new friends, and new opportunities — Volunteer Opportunities at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary—Nature Interpreter with school groups and Nature House Receptionist. For more information call 479-0211 or email: volunteer@swanlake.bc.ca

BE AN IN-SCHOOL MENTOR
Mentor a student in an elementary school 1 hour/week. Play games, sports, cook, read, do arts and crafts and other fun activities. Call Big Brothers Big Sisters at 475-1117 bonnie@bbbsvictoria.com.

Volunteers of all ages are needed to assist individuals with disabilities to get out and be active. By donating only 1-2 hours a week you have the opportunity to participate in an activity you enjoy while giving back to your community! To get involved or for more information, please call Bryanna at 477-6314 or visit: www.rivonline.org/RIVSite.htm

The BC Cancer Agency - Vancouver Island Centre is currently recruiting volunteers for Patient Support positions and for their busy TeaLC Café. Shifts are 3 and 4 hours, once a week. If you are interested in volunteering in this rewarding environment and are available to help out during a weekday, please contact Volunteer Services at 519-5500 ext 3747.

ON CAMPUS

THE NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP - FEBRUARY MEETING "Where have all the flowers gone?" Ecological detective Emily Gonzales investigates the effects that herbivores and non-native grasses have on the native plants of our region. Thursday, February 16, 2006 at 7pm sharp. UVic, MacLaurin Bldg, Rm D-116. Non member drop-in fee: $2. For more info contact 595-5820.

UVIC CAREER SERVICES & AIESEC present: CAREER FAIR 2006, in the SUB on Feb. 8 & 9 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Three events in one this year! Over sixty organizations from different fields. RECRUITMENT FAIR both days. Connections to employers for summer, co-op and career opportunities. NEW this year! GRADUATE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION INFO FAIR, Feb. 8. Connections to graduate, technical and specialized programs at UVic and other institutions. COMMUNITY SERVICES INFO FAIR, Feb. 9. Connections to career paths and volunteer opportunities with local, non-profit organizations. Sign up for FREE "Preparation for the Career Fair" sessions (Jan. 30 – Feb. 7). For a complete list of exhibitors and prep session times: www.uviccareerfair.com.

GORDON HEAD SCHOOL is holding a BIG community event on January 27th & 28th to celebrate the end of an era as an elementary school. The school will become a middle school in September '06. In addition, the event will celebrate the school's 50 years on Kenmore Road and 115 years in Gordon Head, and a commemorative BOOK has been published to acknowledge these landmark events. The book entitled CELEBRATING OUR PAST tells the story of the school since 1891.

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Are you interested in global issues? Then the Commonwealth club is for you! Get involved today! contact Courtney at cnoble@uvic.ca

SERVICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Social Co-op Forum for Lower Vancouver Island. Fairfield United Church, Lower Hall 8:30 (registration and coffee from 8am) to noon.

Join former *Monday Magazine* Editor James MacKinnon as he discusses his experiences eating a "hundred-mile diet" of locally produced food over the past year. Ray Zimmerman of the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Societywill also be making a presentation about the Agricultural Land Reserve in the Capital Region, how it's changed, and why we need to protect our agricultural land. Following these presentations there will be an audience discussion on the state of local agriculture in the South Island and Gulf Islands region. 7 pm, Thursday February 2nd, St. Anne's Academy Auditorium, 835 Humboldt Street (access off Blanshard). Admission is free.

Crocus flowers are always a welcome sign of spring, and every year CNIB's Focus on Crocus fundraiser helps raise money to provide services for people with vision loss on Vancouver Island. Purchase a few pots of these lovely blooms and know you've made difference in the life a person who is visually impaired. Crocuses will be conveniently on sale at all Thrifty Foods locations (2 for $4) from January 25 to February 7, 2006.

Victoria Queer Parents is a parenting group for members of the GLBT community in southern Vancouver Island who are considering becoming parents, are expecting, or are parenting babies and toddlers. The group meets regularly in Victoria. For more information, contact us by email: victoriaqueerparents@yahoo.ca

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Is your life affected by someone's drinking? Help is available in the Victoria area. Call 383-4020 for more information or visit www.bcyukon-al-anon.org for more information.

Saanich Recreation offers quality, affordable Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton Leagues and Skills Development for pre-teens, teens and adults in state-of-the-art double gymnasium at Colquitz Middle School.
www.saanichrecreation.com or 475-5400 for details.

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TREKKING IN TIBET: Join William Jans for a live multimedia adventure through Laos, Southern China and Mystical Tibet. Journeys on the roof of the world' include a pilgrimage around sacred Mount Kailash, and a trip up to 6500 meters on Mount EVEREST! "A one of a kind show - Jans is a hilarious storyteller and shows spectacular images" (*Georgia Straight*), "An absolute must see!" (*Edmonton Journal*), "Very insightful and provocative" (*Ottawa Citizen*).

Gain teaching experience. Wild ARC wild animal rehabilitation centre in Victoria is seeking volunteers that can contribute to the development and delivery of education programs to local schools. Email info@wildarc.ca

Southern Vancouver Island Mycological Society meeting February 2nd at 7:00 p.m. Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 Burnside Rd. W., Victoria. Free parking. Non-members welcome.

Pacific Opera Victoria presents A TASTE OF OPERA SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 200611:15 a.m.-1 p.m. An exciting preview to the company's upcoming production of Benjamin Britten's, The Rape of Lucretia. Join Artistic Director Timothy Vernon for a delicious blend of information, music and a light lunch. Mr. Vernon will discuss this thrillingly dramatic work, and there will be a short musical performance by a lead member of the cast.

SAM & FUZZY
©2005 BY SAM LOGAN.
AH, SO HERE'S WHERE YOU'VE BEEN HIDING! WHAT ARE YOU READING?
AHH! NOTHING, IT'S NOTHING!
GIGGLE! SAM, IS THAT A PORNO MAG?
NO, IT ISN'T!
OH MY GOD! SAM, ARE YOU READING THE ADVICE COLUMN IN A PORNO MAG?!?
NO, I'M NOT!
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON BACK HERE?
SAM IS ACTUALLY READING THE ADVICE COLUMN IN THIS MONTH'S BOOB MAG!
LIES! I SWEAR I ONLY READ IT FOR THE PORNOGRAPHY!
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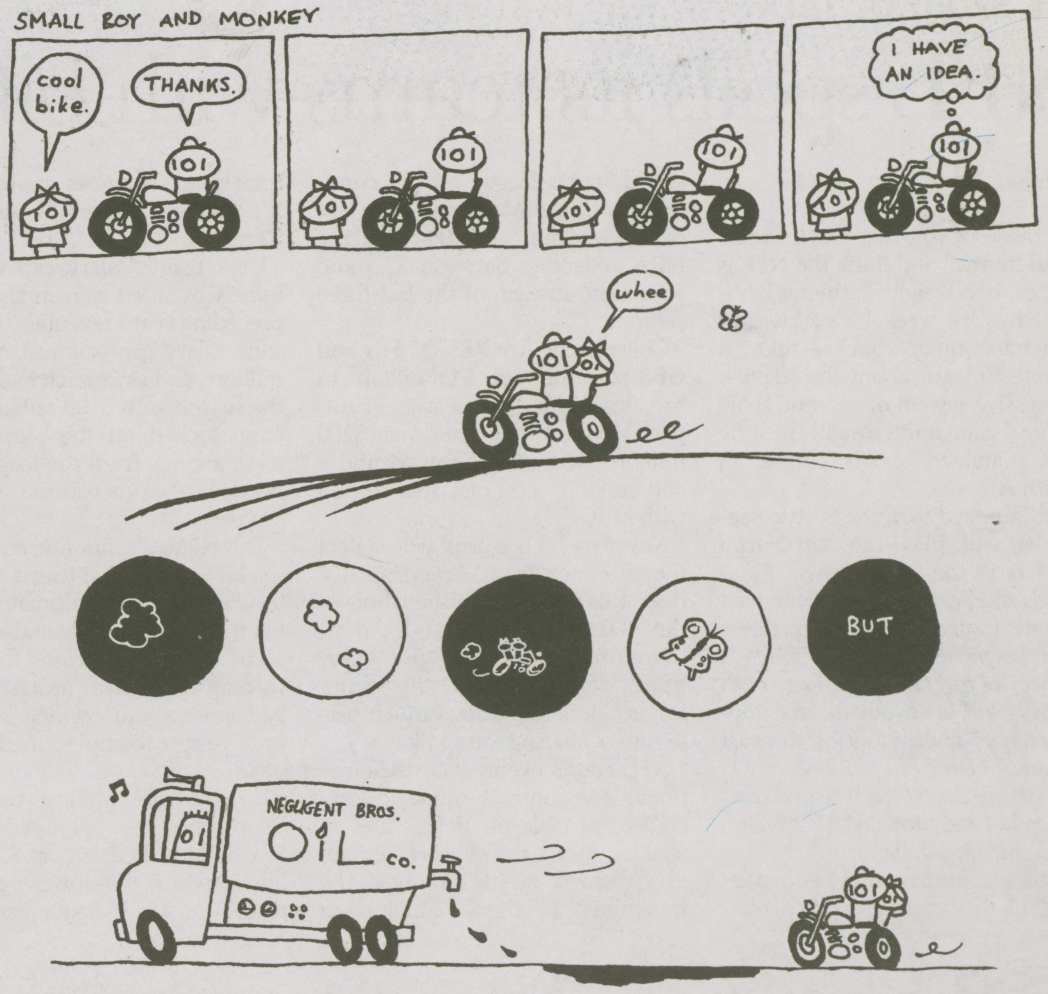
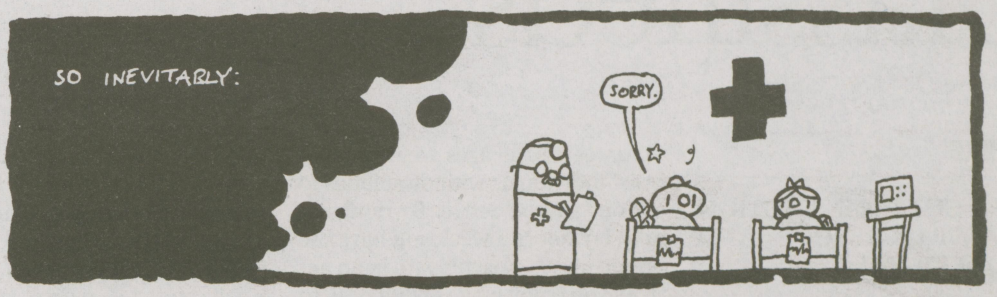
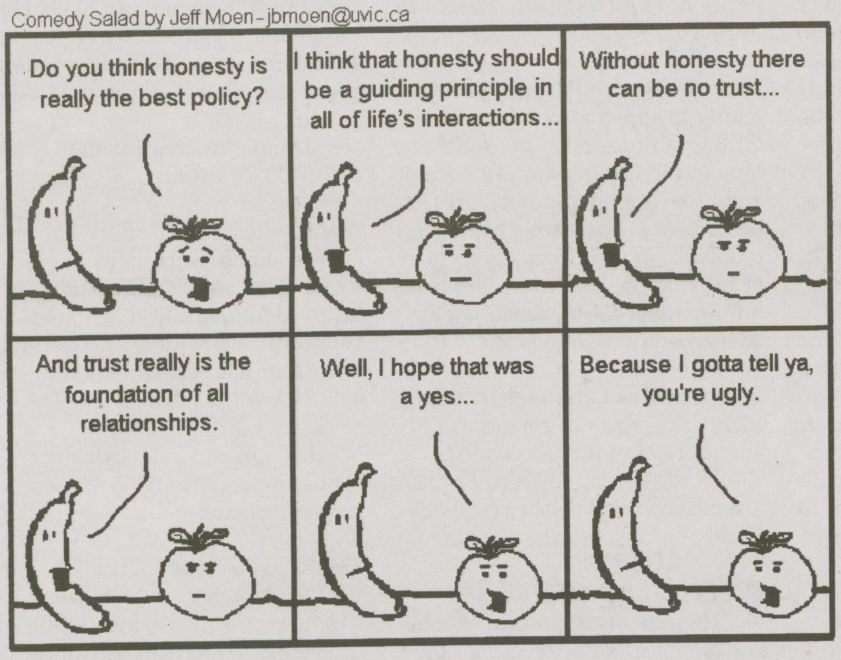


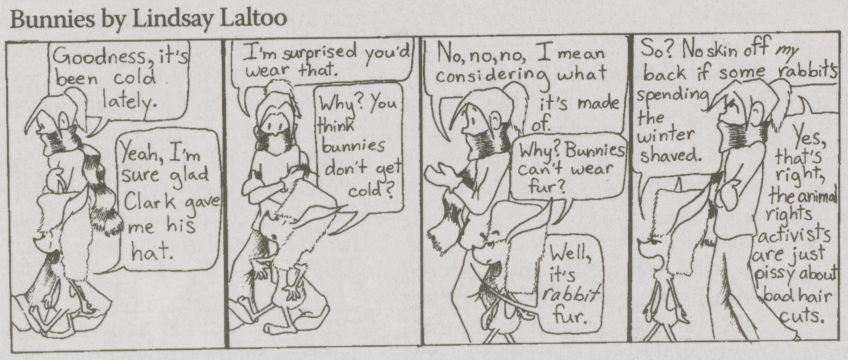


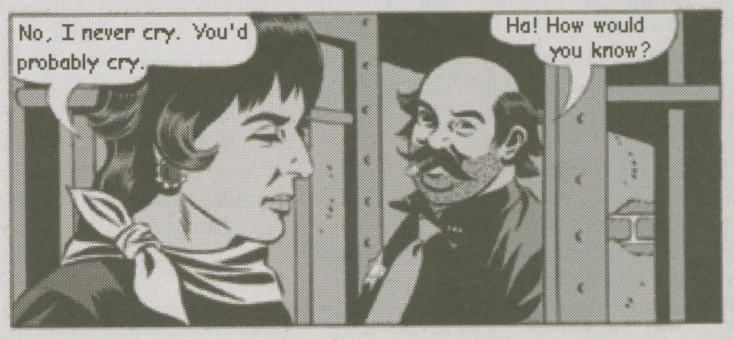
Comedy Salad by Jeff Moen - jbmoen@uvic.ca

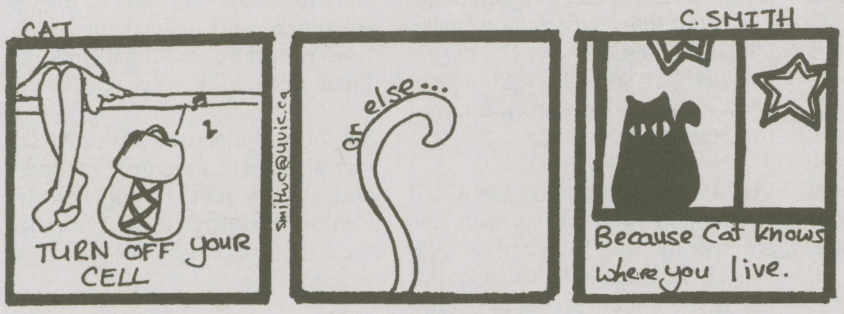

Do you think honesty is really the best policy?
I think that honesty should be a guiding principle in all of life's interactions...
Without honesty there can be no trust...
And trust really is the foundation of all relationships.
Well, I hope that was a yes...
Because I gotta tell ya, you're ugly.

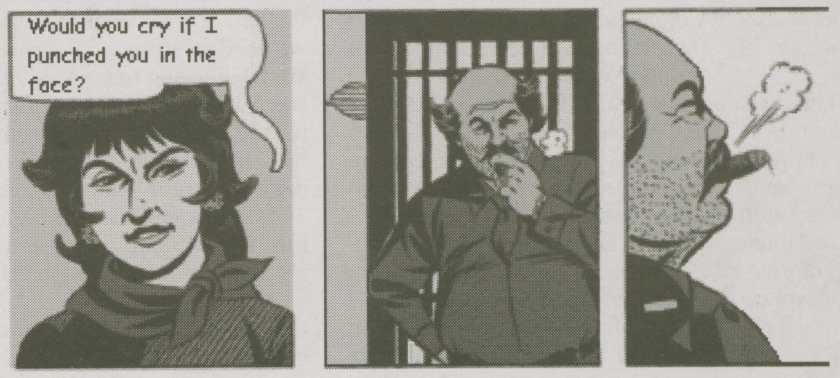
Disce Pati

Bunnies by Lindsay Laltoo


Goodness, it's been cold lately.
Yeah, I'm sure glad Clark gave me his hat.
I'm surprised you'd wear that.
Why? You think bunnies don't get cold?
No, no, no, I mean considering what it's made of.
Why? Bunnies can't wear fur?
Well, it's rabbit fur.
So? No skin off my back if some rabbits spending the winter shaved.
Yes, that's right, the animal rights activists are just pissy about bad hair cuts.

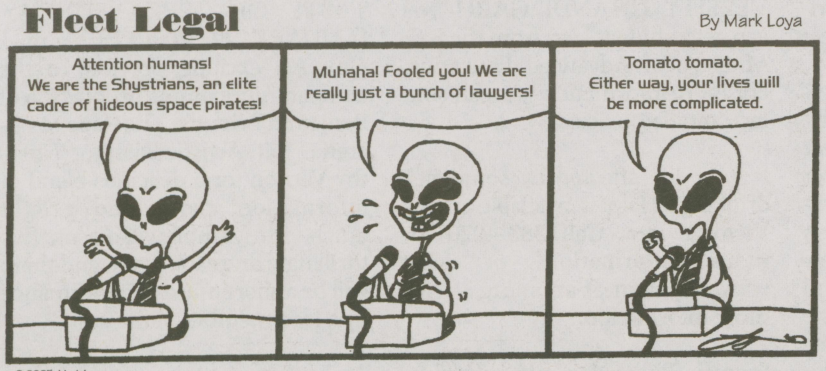
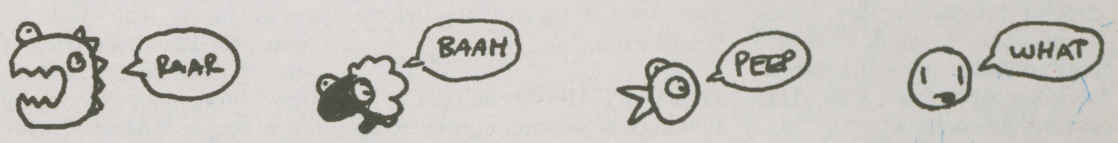






Fleet Legal

By Mark Loya


Attention humans! We are the Shystrians, an elite cadre of hideous space pirates!
Muhaha! Fooled you! We are really just a bunch of lawyers!
Tomato tomato. Either way, your lives will be more complicated.

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